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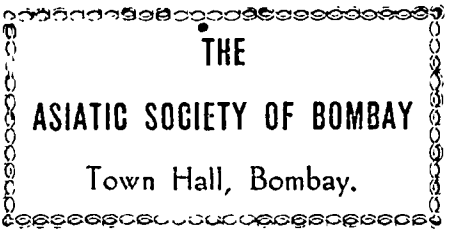

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CHARACTERISTICS

OF

MEN OF GENIUS;

A SERIES OF

Biographical, Historical, and Critical

ESSAYS,

SELECTED, BY PERMISSION,

CHIEFLY FROM THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW.

2355

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE

„Denn Recht hat jeder eigene Character,
Der übereinstimmt mit sich selbst, es gibt
Kein andres Unrecht, als den Widerspruch."

Schiller.

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VOL. II.

21206

LONDON:
CHAPMAN, BROTHERS, 121, NEWGATE STREET.

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SIR WALTER SCOTT.*

"His character seems to belong to some elder and stronger period than ours; and indeed, I cannot help likening it to the architectural fabrics of other ages, which he most delighted in, where there is such a congregation of imagery and tracery, such endless indulgence of whim and fancy, the sublime blending here with the beautiful, and there contrasted with the grotesque,—half, perhaps, seen in the clear daylight, and half by rays tinged with the blazoned forms of the past—that one may be apt to get bewildered among the variety of particular impressions, and not feel either the unity of the grand design, or the height and solidness of the structure, until the door has been closed upon the labyrinth of aisles and shrines, and you survey it from a distance, but still within its shadow.

And yet as, with whatever admiration his friends could not but regard him constantly when among them, the prevailing feeling was still love and affection, so it is now, and so must it ever be, as to his memory."

LOCKHART.

THERE is no kind of writing, which has truth and instruction for its main object, so interesting and popular, on the whole, as biography. History, in its larger sense, has to deal with masses, which, while they divide the attention by the dazzling variety of objects, from their very generality, are

* *Memoirs of the Life of* SIR WALTER SCOTT, Bart., by G. J. LOCKHART. Five Vols. 12mo. Boston. Otis, Broaders, & Co. 1837.

Recollections of SIR WALTER SCOTT, Bart. 16mo. London. James Fraser. 1837.

touching the heart. The great objects on
d, have little relation to the daily occupa-
the reader is most intimate. A nation,
seems to have no soul; and its chequered
contemplated rather with curiosity for the
, than with personal sympathy. How dif-
lings excited by the fortunes of an indivi-
mighty mass, who in the page of history is
urrent, unnoticed and unknown. Instead
ion, at once we see a being like ourselves,
e food, hurt with the same weapons, subject
es, healed by the same means, warmed and
cooled by the same winter and summer" as we are. We place ourselves in his position, and see the passing current of events with the same eyes. We become a party to all his little schemes, share in his triumphs, or mourn with him in the disappointment of defeat. His friends become our friends. We learn to take an interest in their characters, from their relation to him. As they pass away from the stage, one after another, and as the clouds of misfortune, perhaps, or of disease, settle around the evening of his own day, we feel the same sadness that steals over us on a retrospect of earlier and happier hours. And when at last we have followed him to the tomb, we close the volume, and feel that we have turned over another chapter in the history of life.

On the same principles, probably, we are more moved by the exhibition of those characters, whose days have been passed in the ordinary routine of domestic and social life, than by those most intimately connected with the great public events of their age. What, indeed, is the history of such men, but that of the times? The life of Wellington, or of Buonaparte, is the story of the wars and revolutions of Europe. But that of Cowper, gliding away in the seclusion of rural solitude, reflects all those domestic joys, and, alas! more than the sorrows, which gather round every man's fireside and

his heart. In this way, the story of the humblest individual, faithfully recorded, becomes an object of lively interest. How much is that interest increased in the case of a man like Scott, who, from his own fireside, has sent forth a voice to cheer and delight millions of his fellow men; whose life, indeed, passed within the narrow circle of his own village, as it were, but who, nevertheless, has called up more shapes and fantasies within that magic circle, acted more extraordinary parts, and afforded more marvels for the imagination to feed on, than can be furnished by the most nimble-footed, nimble-tongued traveller, from Marco Polo down to Mrs. Trollope, and that literary Sindbad, Captain Hall.

Fortunate as Sir Walter Scott was in his life, it is not the least of his good fortunes, that he left the task of recording it to one so competent as Mr. Lockhart; who, to a familiarity with the person and habits of his illustrious subject, unites such entire sympathy with his pursuits, and such fine tact and discrimination in arranging the materials for their illustration. We have seen it objected, that the biographer has somewhat transcended his lawful limits, in occasionally exposing what a nice tenderness for the reputation of Scott should have led him to conceal. But, on reflection, we are not inclined to adopt these views. It is, indeed, difficult to prescribe any precise rule, by which the biographer should be guided in exhibiting the peculiarities, and still more the defects, of his subject. He should, doubtless, be slow to draw from obscurity those matters which are of a strictly personal and private nature, particularly when they have no material bearing on the character of the individual. But whatever the latter has done, said, or written, to others, can rarely be made to come within this rule. A swell of panegyric, where every thing is in broad sunshine, without the relief of a shadow to contrast it, is out of nature, and must bring discredit on the whole. Nor is it much better, when a sort of twilight mistification is spread over a man's actions, until,

as in the case of all biographies of Cowper previous to that of Southey, we are completely bewildered respecting the real motives of conduct. If ever there was a character above the necessity of any management of this sort, it was Scott's; and we cannot but think that the frank exposition of the minor blemishes which sully it, by securing the confidence of the reader in the general fidelity of the portraiture, and thus disposing him to receive, without distrust, those favorable statements in his history, which might seem incredible, as they certainly are unprecedented, is, on the whole, advantageous to his reputation. As regards the moral effect on the reader, we may apply Scott's own argument for not always recompensing suffering virtue, at the close of his fictions, with temporal prosperity,—that such an arrangement would convey no moral to the heart whatever; since a glance at the great picture of life would show, that virtue is not always thus rewarded.

In regard to the literary execution of Mr. Lockhart's work, the public voice has long since pronounced on it. A prying criticism, may, indeed, discern a few of those contraband epithets, and slipshod sentences, more excusable in *young* "Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk," where, indeed, they are thickly sown, than in the production of a grave Aristarch of British criticism. But this is small game, where every reader of the least taste and sensibility must find so much to applaud. It is enough to say, that in passing from the letters of Scott, with which the work is besprinkled, to the text of the biographer, we find none of those chilling transitions, which occur on the like occasions in more bungling productions; as, for example, in that recent one, in which the unfortunate Hannah More is done to death by her friend Roberts. On the contrary, we are sensible only to a new variety of beauty in the style of composition. The correspondence is illumined by all that is needed to make it intelligible to a stranger, and selected with such discernment, as to produce the clearest

impression of the character of its author. The mass of interesting details is conveyed in language richly colored with poetic sentiment, and at the same time without a tinge of that mysticism, which, as Scott himself truly remarked, "will never do for a writer of fiction, no, nor of history, nor moral essays, nor sermons;" but which, nevertheless, finds more or less favor in our own community, at the present day, in each and all of these.

The second work which we have placed at the head of this article, and from which the last remark of Sir Walter's was borrowed, is a series of notices originally published in "Fraser's Magazine," but now collected, with considerable additions, into a separate volume. Its author, Mr. Robert Pierce Gillies, is a gentleman of the Scotch bar, favorably known by translations from the German. The work conveys a lively report of several scenes and events, which, before the appearance of Lockhart's book, were of more interest and importance than they can now be, lost, as they are, in the flood of light which is poured on us from that source. In the absence of the sixth and last volume, however, Mr. Gillies may help us to a few particulars, respecting the closing years of Sir Walter's life, that may have some novelty,—we know not how much to be relied on,—for the reader. In the present notice of a work so familiar to most persons, we shall confine ourselves to some of those circumstances which contributed to form, or have an obvious connexion with, his literary character.

Walter Scott was born at Edinburgh, August 15th, 1771. The character of his father, a respectable member of that class of attorneys, who in Scotland are called Writers to the Signet, is best conveyed to the reader by saying, that he sat for the portrait of Mr. Saunders Fairford, in "Redgauntlet." His mother was a woman of taste and imagination, and had an obvious influence in guiding those of her son. His ancestors, by both father's and mother's side, were of "gentle blood,"

—a position which, placed between the highest and the lower ranks of society, was extremely favorable, as affording facilities for communication with both. A lameness in his infancy,—a most fortunate lameness for the world, if, as Scott says, it spoiled a soldier,—and a delicate constitution, made it expedient to try the efficacy of country air and diet; and he was placed under the roof of his paternal grandfather at Sandy-Knowe, a few miles distant from the capital. Here his days were passed in the open fields, "with no other fellowship," as he says, "than that of the sheep and lambs;" and here, in the lap of Nature,

"Meet nurse for a poetic child,"

his infant vision was greeted with those rude, romantic scenes, which his own verses have since hallowed for the pilgrims from every clime. In the long evenings, his imagination, as he grew older, was warmed by traditionary legends of border heroism and adventure, repeated by the aged relative, who had herself witnessed the last gleams of border chivalry. His memory was one of the first powers of his mind, which exhibited an extraordinary development. One of the longest of these old ballads, in particular, stuck so close to it, and he repeated it with such Stentorian vociferation, as to draw from the minister of a neighbouring kirk the testy exclamation, "One may as well speak in the mouth of a cannon, as where that child is."

On his removal to Edinburgh, in his eighth year, he was subjected to different influences. His worthy father was a severe martinet in all the forms of his profession, and it may be added, indeed, of his religion, which he contrived to make somewhat burdensome to his more volatile son. The tutor was still more strict in his religious sentiments, and the lightest literary *divertissement* in which either of them indulged, was such as could be gleaned from the time-honored folios of Archbishop Spottiswoode, or worthy Robert Wodrow. Even

here, however, Scott's young mind contrived to gather materials and impulses for future action. In his long arguments with Master Mitchell, he became steeped in the history of the Covenanters, and the persecuted Church of Scotland, while he was still more rooted in his own Jacobite notions, early instilled into his mind by the tales of his relatives of Sandy-Knowe, whose own family had been out in the "affair of forty-five." Amidst the professional and polemical worthies of his father's library, Scott detected a copy of Shakspeare; and he relates with what *goût* he used to creep out of his bed, where he had been safely deposited for the night, and, by the light of the fire, *in puris naturalibus*, as it were, pore over the pages of the great magician, and study those mighty spells, by which he gave to airy fantasies the forms and substance of humanity. Scott distinctly recollected the time and the spot where he first opened a volume of Percy's "Reliques of English Poetry;" a work which may have suggested to him the plan and the purpose of the "Border Minstrelsy." Every day's experience shows us how much more actively the business of education goes on out of school, than in it. And Scott's history shows equally, that genius, whatever obstacles may be thrown in its way in one direction, will find room for its expansion in another; as the young tree sends forth its shoots most prolific in that quarter where the sunshine is permitted to fall on it.

At the High School, in which he was placed by his father at an early period, he seems not to have been particularly distinguished in the regular course of studies. His voracious appetite for books, however, of a certain cast, as romances, chivalrous tales, and worm-eaten chronicles scarcely less chivalrous, and his wonderful memory for such reading as struck his fancy, soon made him regarded by his fellows as a phenomenon of black-letter scholarship, which, in process of time, achieved for him the cognomen of that redoubtable schoolman, Duns Scotus. He now also gave evidence of his powers of

creation as well as of acquisition. He became noted for his own stories, generally bordering on the marvellous, with a plentiful seasoning of knight-errantry, which suited his bold and chivalrous temper. "Slink over beside me, Jamie," he would whisper to his schoolfellow Ballantyne, "and I'll tell you a story." Jamie was, indeed, destined to sit beside him during the greater part of his life.

The same tastes and talents continued to display themselves more strongly with increasing years. Having beaten pretty thoroughly the ground of romantic and legendary lore, at least so far as the English libraries, to which he had access, would permit, he next endeavoured, while at the University, to which he had been transferred from the High School, to pursue the same subject in the Continental languages. Many were the strolls which he took in the neighbourhood, especially to Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crags, where, perched on some almost inaccessible eyrie, he might be seen conning over his Ariosto or Cervantes, or some other bard of romance, with some favorite companion of his studies, or pouring into the ears of the latter his own boyish legends, glowing with

> "achievements high,
> And circumstance of chivalry."

A critical knowledge of these languages he seems not to have obtained; and, even in the French, made but an indifferent figure in conversation. An accurate acquaintance with the pronunciation and prosody of a foreign tongue, is undoubtedly a desirable accomplishment. But it is, after all, a mere accomplishment, subordinate to the great purposes for which a language is to be learned. Scott did not, as is too often the case, mistake the shell for the kernel. He looked on language only as the key to unlock the foreign stores of wisdom, the pearls of inestimable price, wherever found with which to enrich his native literature.

After a brief residence at the University, he was regularly

indented as an apprentice to his father, in 1786. One can hardly imagine a situation less congenial with the ardent, effervescing spirit of a poetic fancy; fettered down to a daily routine of drudgery, scarcely above that of a mere scrivener. It proved a useful school of discipline to him, however. It formed early habits of method, punctuality, and laborious industry; business habits, in short, most adverse to the poetic temperament, but indispensable to the accomplishment of the gigantic tasks which he afterwards assumed. He has himself borne testimony to his general diligence in his new vocation, and tells us, that on one occasion he transcribed no less than a hundred and twenty folio pages at a sitting.

In the midst of these mechanical duties, however, he did not lose sight of the favorite objects of his study and meditation. He made frequent excursions into the Lowland as well as Highland districts, in search of traditionary relics. These pilgrimages he frequently performed on foot. His constitution, now become hardy by severe training, made him careless of exposure; and his frank and warm-hearted manners,—eminently favorable to his purposes, by thawing at once any feelings of frosty reserve, which might have encountered a stranger,—made him equally welcome at the staid and decorous manse, and at the rough but hospitable board of the peasant. Here was indeed the study of the future novelist; the very school in which to meditate those models of character and situation, which he was afterwards, long afterwards, to transfer, in such living colors, to the canvas. "He was makin' himsell a' the time," says one of his companions, "but he didna ken, may be, what he was about, till years had past. At first he thought o' little, I dare say, but the queerness and the fun." The honest Writer to the Signet does not seem to have thought it either so funny or so profitable; for on his son's return from one of these *raids*, as he styled them, the old gentleman peevishly inquired how he had been living so long. "Pretty much like the young ravens,"

answered Walter; "I only wished I had been as good a player on the flute as poor George Primrose in the Vicar of Wakefield. If I had his art, I should like nothing better than to tramp like him from cottage to cottage over the world." "I doubt," said the grave Clerk to the Signet, "I greatly doubt, Sir, you were born for nae better than a *gangrel scrapegut!*" Perhaps even the revelation, could it have been made to him, of his son's future literary glory, would scarcely have satisfied the worthy father, who, probably, would have regarded a seat on the bench of the Court of Sessions as much higher glory. At all events, this was not far from the judgment of Dominie Mitchell, who, in his notice of his illustrious pupil, "sincerely regrets, that Sir Walter's precious time was so much devoted to the *dulce* rather than the *utile* of composition, and that his great talents should have been wasted on such subjects!"

It is impossible to glance at Scott's early life, without perceiving how powerfully all its circumstances, whether accidental or contrived, conspired to train him for the peculiar position he was destined to occupy in the world of letters. There never was a character, in whose infant germ, as it were, the mature and fully developed lineaments might be more distinctly traced. What he was in his riper age, so he was in his boyhood. We discern the same tastes, the same peculiar talents, the same social temper and affections, and, in a great degree, the same habits,—in their embryo state, of course, but distinctly marked;—and his biographer has shown no little skill in enabling us to trace their gradual, progressive expansion, from the hour of his birth up to the full prime and maturity of manhood.

In 1792, Scott, whose original destination of a Writer had been changed to that of an Advocate,—from his father's conviction, as it would seem, of the superiority of his talents to the former station,—was admitted to the Scottish bar. Here he continued in assiduous attendance during the regular terms,

but more noted for his stories in the Outer House, than his arguments in Court. It may appear singular, that a person so gifted, both as a writer and as a *raconteur*, should have had no greater success in his profession. But the case is not uncommon. Indeed, experience shows, that the most eminent writers have not made the most successful speakers. It is not more strange, than that a good writer of novels should not excel as a dramatic author. Perhaps a consideration of the subject would lead us to refer the phenomena in both cases to the same principle. At all events, Scott was an exemplification of both; and we leave the solution to those who have more leisure and ingenuity to unravel the mystery.

Scott's leisure, in the mean time, was well employed in storing his mind with German romance, with whose wild fictions, intrenching on the grotesque, indeed, he found at that time more sympathy than in later life. In 1796 he first appeared before the public as a translator of Bürger's well-known ballads, thrown off by him at a heat, and which found favor with the few into whose hands they passed. He subsequently adventured in Monk Lewis's crazy bark,—"Tales of Wonder,"—which soon went to pieces, leaving, however, among its surviving fragments, the scattered contributions of Scott.

At last, in 1802, he gave to the world his two first volumes of the "Border Minstrelsy," printed by his old schoolfellow, Ballantyne, and which, by the beauty of the typography, as well as literary execution, made a sort of epoch in Scottish literary history. There was no work of Scott's after life, which showed the result of so much preliminary labor. Before ten years old, he had collected several volumes of ballads and traditions, and we have seen how diligently he pursued the same vocation in later years. The publication was admitted to be far more faithful, as well as skilfully collated, than its prototype, the "Reliques" of Bishop Percy; while his notes

contained a mass of antiquarian information relative to border life, conveyed in a style of beauty unprecedented in topics of this kind, and enlivened with a higher interest than poetic fiction. Percy's "Reliques" had prepared the way for the kind reception of the "Minstrelsy," by the general relish,—notwithstanding Dr. Johnson's protest,—it had created for the simple pictures of a pastoral and heroic time. Burns had since familiarized the English ear with the Doric melodies of his native land; and now a greater than Burns appeared, whose first production, by a singular chance, came into the world in the very year in which the Ayrshire minstrel was withdrawn from it, as if Nature had intended that the chain of poetic inspiration should not be broken. The delight of the public was further augmented on the appearance of the third volume of the "Minstrelsy," containing various imitations of the old ballad, which displayed all the rich fashion of the antique, purified from the mould and rust by which the beauties of such weather-beaten trophies are defaced.

The first edition of the "Minstrelsy," consisting of eight hundred copies, went off, as Lockhart tells us, in less than a year; and the poet, on the publication of a second, received five hundred pounds sterling from Longman,—an enormous price for such a commodity, but the best bargain, probably, that the bookseller ever made, as the subsequent sale has since extended to twenty thousand copies.

Scott was not in great haste to follow up his success. It was three years later, before he took the field as an independent author, in a poem which at once placed him among the great original writers of his country. The "Lay of the Last Minstrel," a complete expansion of the ancient ballad into an epic form, was published in 1805. It was opening a new creation in the realm of fancy. It seemed as if the author had transfused into his page the strong delineations of the Homeric pencil, the rude, but generous gallantry of a primi-

tive period, softened by the more airy and magical inventions of Italian romance,* and conveyed in tones of natural melody, such as had not been heard since the strains of Burns. The book speedily found that unprecedented circulation, which all his subsequent compositions attained. Other writers had addressed themselves to a more peculiar and limited feeling, to a narrower, and generally a more select, audience. But Scott was found to combine all the qualities of interest for every order. He drew from the pure springs, which gush forth in every heart. His narrative chained every reader's attention by the stirring variety of its incidents, while the fine touches of sentiment with which it abounded, like wild flowers, springing up spontaneously around, were full of freshness and beauty, that made one wonder others should not have stooped to gather them before.

The success of the "Lay" determined the course of its author's future life. Notwithstanding his punctual attention to his profession, his utmost profits for any one year of the ten he had been in practice had not exceeded two hundred and thirty pounds; and of late they had sensibly declined. Latterly, indeed, he had coquetted somewhat too openly with the Muse for his professional reputation. Themis has always been found a stern and jealous mistress, chary of dispensing her golden favors to those who are seduced into a flirtation with her more volatile sister.

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* "Mettendo lo Turpin, lo metto anch' io,"

says Ariosto, playfully, when he tells a particularly tough story.

"I cannot tell how the truth may be,
I say the tale as 'twas said to me,"

says the author of the "Lay," on a similar occasion. The resemblance might be traced much farther than mere forms of expression, to the Italian, who, like

"*the Ariosto of the North,*
Sung ladye-love, and war, romance, and knightly worth."

Scott, however, soon found himself in a situation that made him independent of her favors. His income from the two offices to which he was promoted, of Sheriff of Selkirk, and Clerk of the Court of Sessions, was so ample, combined with what fell to him by inheritance and marriage, that he was left at liberty freely to consult his own tastes. Amid the seductions of poetry, however, he never shrunk from his burdensome professional duties; and he submitted to all their drudgery with unflinching constancy, when the labors of his pen made the emoluments almost beneath consideration. He never relished the idea of being divorced from active life by the solitary occupations of a recluse. And his official functions, however severely they taxed his time, may be said to have, in some degree, compensated him by the new scenes of life which they were constantly disclosing,—the very materials of those fictions, on which his fame and his fortune were to be built.

Scott's situation was, on the whole, eminently propitious to literary pursuits. He was married, and passed the better portion of the year in the country, where the quiet pleasures of his fireside circle, and a keen relish for rural sports, relieved his mind, and invigorated both health and spirits. In early life, it seems, he had been crossed in love; and, like Dante and Byron, to whom, in this respect, he is often compared, he has more than once, according to his biographer, shadowed forth in his verses the object of his unfortunate passion.. He does not appear to have taken it so seriously, however, nor to have shown the morbid sensibility in relation to it, discovered by both Byron and Dante, the former of whom perhaps found his *cara sposa* so much too cold, as the latter certainly did his too hot, for his own temperament, as to seek relief from the present in the poetical visions of the past.

Scott's next great poem was his "Marmion," transcending, in the judgment of many, all his other epics, and containing,

in the judgment of all, passages of poetic fire, which he never equalled; but which, nevertheless, was greeted, on its entrance into the world, by a critique, in the leading journal of the day, of the most caustic and unfriendly temper. The journal was the Edinburgh, to which he had been a frequent contributor, and the reviewer was his intimate friend, Jeffrey. The unkindest cut in the article was, the imputation of a neglect of Scottish character and feeling. "There is scarcely one trait of true Scottish nationality or patriotism introduced into the whole Poem; and Mr. Scott's only expression of admiration for the beautiful country to which he belongs is put, if we rightly remember, into the mouth of one of his Southern favorites." This of Walter Scott! The critic had some misgivings, it would seem, as to the propriety of the part he was playing, or at least as to its effect on the mind of his friend; since he sent a copy of the yet unpublished article to the latter on the day he was engaged to dine with him, with a request for a speedy answer. Scott testified no visible marks of vexation, although his wife was not so discreet, telling Jeffrey rather bluntly, she hoped Constable would pay him well for abusing his friend. The gossips of the day in Edinburgh exaggerated the story into her actually turning the reviewer out of doors. He well deserved it.

The affair, however, led to important consequences. Scott was not slow, after this, in finding the political principles of the Edinburgh so repugnant to his own, (and they certainly were as opposite as the poles,) that he first dropped the journal, and next labored with unwearied diligence to organize another, whose main purpose should be to counteract the heresies of the former. This was the origin of the London Quarterly, more imputable to Scott's exertions, than to those of any, indeed all, other persons. The result has been, doubtless, highly serviceable to the interests of both morals and letters. Not that the new Review was conducted with more fairness, or, in this sense, *principle*, than its antagonist. A

remark of Scott's own, in a letter to Ellis, shows with how much principle. "I have run up an attempt on 'The Curse of Kehama' for the Quarterly. It affords cruel openings to the quizzers, and, I suppose, will get it roundly in the Edinburgh Review. I would have made a very different hand of it indeed, had the order of the day been *pour dechirer*." But, although the fate of the individual was thus, to a certain extent, a matter of caprice, or rather prejudgment in the critic, yet the great abstract questions in morals, politics, and literature, by being discussed on both sides, were presented in a fuller, and of course fairer, light to the public. Another beneficial result to letters was,—and we shall gain credit, at least, for candor, in confessing it—that it broke down somewhat of that divinity, which hedged in the despotic *we* of the reviewer, so long as no rival arose to contest the sceptre. The claims to infallibility, so long and slavishly acquiesced in, fell to the ground, when thus stoutly asserted by conflicting parties. It was pretty clear, that the same thing could not be all black and all white, at the same time. In short, it was the old story of pope and antipope; and the public began to find out, that there might be hopes for the salvation of an author, though damned by the literary popedom. Time, indeed, by reversing many of its decisions, must at length have shown the same thing.

But to return. Scott showed how nearly he had been touched to the quick, by two other acts not so discreet. These were, the establishment of an Annual Register, and of the great publishing house of the Ballantynes, in which he became a silent partner. The last step involved him in grievous embarrassments, and stimulated him to exertions, which required "a frame of adamant and soul of fire" to have endured. At the same time, we find him overwhelmed with poetical, biographical, historical, and critical compositions, together with editorial labors of appalling magnitude. In this multiplication of himself in a thousand forms, we see him

always the same, vigorous and effective. "Poetry," he says, in one of his letters, "is a scourging crop, and ought not to be hastily repeated. Editing, therefore, may be considered as a green crop of turnips or peas, extremely useful to those whose circumstances do not admit of giving their farm a summer fallow." It might be regretted, however, that he should have wasted powers fitted for so much higher culture, on the coarse products of a kitchen-garden, which might have been safely trusted to inferior hands.

In 1811, Scott gave to the world his exquisite poem, "The Lady of the Lake." One of his fair friends had remonstrated with him on thus risking again the laurel he had already won. He replied, with characteristic, and indeed prophetic spirit, "If I fail, *I will write prose all my life.* But if I succeed,

> 'Up wi' the bonnie blue bonnet,
> The dirk and the feather an a'!'"

In his eulogy on Byron, Scott remarks, "There has been no reposing under the shade of his laurels, no living upon the resource of past reputation; none of that *coddling* and petty precaution, which little authors call 'taking care of their fame.' Byron let his fame take care of itself." Scott could not have more accurately described his own character.

The "Lady of the Lake" was welcomed with an enthusiasm, surpassing that which attended any other of his poems. It seemed like the sweet breathings of his native pibroch, stealing over glen and mountain, and calling up all the delicious associations of rural solitude, which beautifully contrasted with the din of battle and the shrill cry of the war-trumpet, that stirred the soul in every page of his "Marmion." The publication of this work carried his fame as a poet to its most brilliant height. Its popularity may be inferred from the fact, stated by Lockhart, that the post-horse duty rose to an extraordinary degree in Scotland, from the eagerness of travellers to visit the localities of the poem. A more sub-

stantial evidence was afforded in its amazing circulation, and consequently its profits. The press could scarcely keep pace with the public demand, and no less than fifty thousand copies of it have been sold since the date of its appearance. The successful author realized more than two thousand guineas from his production. Milton received ten pounds for the two editions which he lived to see of his "Paradise Lost." The Ayrshire bard had sighed for "a lass wi' a tocher." Scott had now found one in the Muse, such as no Scottish, nor any other poet had ever found before.

While the poetical fame of Scott was thus at its zenith, a new star rose above the horizon, whose eccentric course and dazzling radiance completely bewildered the spectator. In 1812, "Childe Harold" appeared, and the attention seemed to be now called, for the first time, from the outward form of man and visible nature, to the secret depths of the soul. The darkest recesses of human passion were laid open, and the note of sorrow was prolonged in tones of agonized sensibility, the more touching as coming from one who was placed on those dazzling heights of rank and fashion, which, to the vulgar eye at least, seem to lie in unclouded sunshine. Those of the present generation who have heard only the same key thrummed *ad nauseam* by the feeble imitators of his Lordship, can form no idea of the effect produced when the chords were first swept by the master's fingers. It was found impossible for the ear once attuned to strains of such compass and ravishing harmony, to return with the same relish to purer, it might be, but tamer melody; and the sweet voice of the Scottish minstrel lost much of its power to charm, let him charm never so wisely. While "Rokeby" was in preparation, bets were laid on the rival candidates by the wits of the day. The sale of this poem, though great, showed a sensible decline in the popularity of its author. This became still more evident on the publication of "The Lord of the Isles;" and Scott admitted the conviction with his characte-

ristic spirit and good-nature. "'Well, James,' (he said to his printer,) 'I have given you a week,—what are people saying about the Lord of the Isles?' I hesitated a little, after the fashion of Gil Blas, but he speedily brought the matter to a point. 'Come,' he said, 'speak out my good fellow; what has put it into your head to be on so much ceremony *with me* all of a sudden? But, I see how it is, the result is given in one word,—*Disappointment.*' My silence admitted his inference to the fullest extent. His countenance certainly did look rather blank for a few seconds; in truth, he had been wholly unprepared for the event.—At length he said, with perfect cheerfulness, 'Well, well, James, so be it,—but you know we must not droop, for we can't afford to give over. Since one line has failed, we must stick to something else.'" This *something else* was a mine he had already hit upon, of invention and substantial wealth, such as Thomas the Rhymer, or Michael Scott, or any other adept in the black art, had never dreamed of.

Everybody knows the story of the composition of "Waverley," the most interesting story in the annals of letters; and how, some ten years after its commencement, it was fished out of some old lumber in an attic, and completed in a few weeks for the press, in 1814. Its appearance marks a more distinct epoch in English literature than that of the poetry of its author. All previous attempts in the same school of fiction,—a school of English growth,—had been cramped by the limited information or talent of the writers. Smollett had produced his spirited sea-pieces, and Fielding his warm sketches of country life, both of them mixed up with so much Billingsgate, as required a strong flavor of wit to make them tolerable. Richardson had covered acres of canvas with his faithful family pictures. Mrs. Radcliffe had dipped up to the elbows in horrors; while Miss Burney's fashionable gossip, and Miss Edgeworth's Hogarth drawings of the prose,—not

the poetry,—of life and character, had each and all found favor in their respective ways. But a work now appeared, in which the author swept over the whole range of character with entire freedom, as well as fidelity, ennobling the whole by high historic associations, and in a style, varying with his theme, but whose pure and classic flow was tinctured with just so much of poetic coloring, as suited the purposes of romance. It was Shakspeare in prose.

The work was published, as we know, anonymously. Mr. Gillies states, however, that while in the press, fragments of it were communicated to "Mr. Mackenzie, Dr. Brown, Mrs. Hamilton, and other *savans* or *savantes*, whose dicta on the merits of a new novel were considered unimpeachable." By their approbation "a strong body of friends was formed, and the curiosity of the public prepared the way for its reception." This may explain the rapidity with which the anonymous publication rose into a degree of favor, which, though not less surely perhaps, it might have been more slow in achieving. The author jealously preserved his incognito, and, in order to heighten the mystification, flung off almost simultaneously a variety of works, in prose and poetry, any one of which might have been the labor of months. The public for a moment was at fault. There seemed to be six Richmonds in the field. The world, therefore, was reduced to the dilemma, of either supposing that half a dozen different hands could work in precisely the same style, or that one could do the work of half a dozen. With time, however, the veil wore thinner and thinner, until at length, and long before the ingenious argument of Mr. Adolphus, there was scarcely a critic so purblind as not to discern behind it the features of the mighty Minstrel.

Constable had offered seven hundred pounds for the new novel. "It was," says Mr. Lockhart, "ten times as much as Miss Edgeworth ever realized from any of her popular Irish

tales." Scott declined the offer, which had been a good one for the bookseller had he made it as many thousands. But it passed the art of necromancy to divine this.

Scott, once entered on this new career, followed it up with an energy unrivalled in the history of literature. The public mind was not suffered to cool for a moment, before its attention was called to another miracle of creation from the same hand. Even illness, that would have broken the spirit of most men, as it prostrated the physical energies of Scott, opposed no impediment to the march of composition. When he could no longer write, he could dictate; and in this way, amid the agonies of a racking disease, he composed "The Bride of Lammermoor," the "Legend of Montrose," and a great part of "Ivanhoe." The first, indeed, is darkened with those deep shadows that might seem thrown over it by the sombre condition of its author. But what shall we say of the imperturbable dry humor of the gallant Captain Dugald Dalgetty of Drumthwacket, or of the gorgeous revelries of Ivanhoe,—

> "Such sights as youthful poets dream,
> On summer eves by haunted stream,"—

what shall we say of such brilliant day-dreams for a bed of torture? Never before had the spirit triumphed over such agonies of the flesh. "The best way," said Scott, in one of his talks with Gillies, "is, *if possible*, to triumph over disease by setting it at defiance, somewhat on the same principle as one avoids being stung by boldly grasping a nettle."

The prose fictions were addressed to a much larger audience than the poems could be. They had attractions for every age and every class. The profits, of course, were commensurate. Arithmetic has never been so severely taxed, as in the computation of Scott's productions, and the proceeds resulting from them. In one year he received (or, more properly, was credited with,—for it is somewhat doubtful how

much he actually received) fifteen thousand pounds for his novels, comprehending the first edition and the copyright. The discovery of this rich mine furnished its fortunate proprietor with the means of gratifying the fondest, and, indeed, most chimerical, desires. He had always coveted the situation of a lord of acres,—a Scottish laird; where his passion for planting might find scope in the creation of whole forests, —for every thing with him was on a magnificent scale,—and where he might indulge the kindly feelings of his nature in his benevolent offices to a numerous and dependent tenantry. The few acres of the original purchase now swelled into hundreds, and, for aught we know, thousands; for one tract alone we find incidentally noticed as costing thirty thousand pounds. "It rounds off the property so handsomely," he says, in one of his letters. There was always a corner to "round off." The mansion, in the mean time, from a simple cottage *ornée*, was amplified into the dimensions almost, as well as the bizarre proportions, of some old feudal castle. The furniture and decorations were of the costliest kind; the wainscots of oak and cedar, the floors tesselated with marbles, or woods of different dyes, the ceilings fretted and carved with all the delicate tracery of a Gothic abbey, the storied windows blazoned with the richly colored insignia of heraldry, the walls garnished with time-honored trophies, or curious specimens of art, or volumes sumptuously bound,—in short, with all that luxury could command, or ingenuity devise; while a copious reservoir of gas supplied every corner of the mansion with such fountains of light, as must have puzzled the genius of the *lamp* to provide for the less fortunate Aladdin.

Scott's exchequer must have been seriously taxed in another form, by the crowds of visitors whom he entertained under his hospitable roof. There was scarcely a person of note, or, indeed, not of note, who visited that country without paying his respects to the Lion of Scotland. Lockhart reckons up a

full sixth of the British peerage, who had been there within his recollection; and Captain Hall, in his amusing Notes, remarks, that it was not unusual for a dozen or more coach loads to find their way into his grounds in the course of the day, most of whom found, or forced, an entrance into the mansion. Such was the heavy tax paid by his celebrity, and we may add, his good-nature. For if the one had been a whit less than the other, he could never have tolerated such a nuisance.

The cost of his correspondence gives one no light idea of the demands made on his time, as well as purse, in another form. His postage for letters, independently of franks, by which a large portion of it was covered, amounted to a hundred and fifty pounds, it seems, in the course of the year. In this, indeed, should be included ten pounds for a pair of unfortunate *Cherokee Lovers*, sent all the way from our own happy land, in order to be god-fathered by Sir Walter on the London boards. Perhaps the smart-money he had to pay on this interesting occasion, had its influence in mixing up rather more acid than was natural to him, in his judgments of our countrymen. At all events, the Yankees find little favor on the few occasions on which he has glanced at them in his correspondence. "I am not at all surprised," he says, in a letter to Miss Edgeworth, apparently chiming in with her own tune, "I am not at all surprised at what you say of the Yankees. They are a people possessed of very considerable energy, quickened and brought into eager action by an honorable love of their country, and pride in their institutions; but they are as yet rude in their ideas of social intercourse, and totally ignorant, speaking generally, of all the art of good breeding, which consists chiefly in a postponement of one's own petty wishes or comforts to those of others. By rude questions and observations, an absolute disrespect to other people's feelings, and a ready indulgence of their own, they make one feverish in their company, though perhaps you may

be ashamed to confess the reason. But this will wear off, and is already wearing away. Men, when they have once got benches, will soon fall into the use of cushions. They are advancing in the lists of our literature, and they will not be long deficient in the *petite morale*, especially as they have, like ourselves, the rage for travelling." On another occasion, he does, indeed, admit having met with, in the course of his life, "four or five well-lettered Americans, ardent in pursuit of knowledge, and free from the ignorance and forward presumption, which distinguish many of their countrymen." This seems hard measure; but perhaps we should find it difficult, among the many who have visited this country, to recollect as great a number of Englishmen,—and Scotchmen to boot,—entitled to a higher degree of commendation. It can hardly be, that the well-informed and well-bred men of both countries make a point of staying at home; so we suppose we must look for the solution of the matter in the existence of some disagreeable ingredient, common to the characters of both nations, sprouting as they do from a common stock, which remains latent at home, and is never fully disclosed till they get into a foreign climate. But as this problem seems pregnant with philosophical, physiological, and, for aught we know, psychological matter, we have not courage for it here, but recommend the solution to Miss Martineau, to whom it will afford a very good title for a new chapter in her next edition. The strictures we have quoted, however, to speak more seriously, are worth attending to, coming as they do from a shrewd observer, and one whose judgments, though here somewhat colored, no doubt, by political prejudice, are, in the main, distinguished by a sound and liberal philanthropy. But were he ten times an enemy, we would say, "Fas est ab hoste doceri."

With the splendid picture of the baronial residence at Abbotsford, Mr. Lockhart closes all that at this present writing we have received of his delightful work in this country.

And in the last sentence, the melancholy sound of "the muffled drum," gives ominous warning of what we are to expect in the sixth and concluding volume. In the dearth of more authentic information, we will piece out our sketch with a few facts gleaned from the somewhat meagre bill of fare,—meagre by comparison with the rich banquet of the true Amphitryon,—afforded by the "Recollections" of Mr. Robert Pierce Gillies.

The unbounded popularity of the Waverley novels led to still more extravagant anticipations on the part both of the publishers and author. Some hints of a falling off, though but slightly, in the public favor, were unheeded by both parties; though, to say truth, the exact state of things was never disclosed to Scott, it being Ballantyne's notion, that it would prove a damper, and that the true course was, "to press on more sail as the wind lulled." In these sanguine calculations, not only enormous sums, or, to speak correctly, *bills*, were given for what had been written; but the author's drafts, to the amount of many thousand pounds, were accepted by Constable in favor of works, the very embryos of which lay, not only unformed, but unimagined in the womb of time. In return for this singular accommodation, Scott was induced to indorse the drafts of his publisher; and in this way an amount of liabilities was incurred, which, considering the character of the house, and its transactions, it is altogether inexplicable, that a person in the independent position of Sir Walter Scott, should have subjected himself to for a moment. He seems to have had entire confidence in the stability of the firm; a confidence to which it seems, from Mr. Gillies's account, not to have been entitled, from the first moment of his connexion with it. The great reputation of the house, however, the success and magnitude of some of its transactions, especially the publication of these novels, gave it a large credit, which enabled it to go forward with a great show of prosperity, in ordinary times, and veiled the tottering state of

things, probably, from Constable's own eyes. It is but the tale of yesterday. The case of Constable & Co. is, unhappily, a very familiar one to us. But when the hurricane of 1825 came on, it swept away all those buildings that were not founded on a rock; and those of Messrs. Constable, among others, soon became literally mere *castles in the air*. In plain English, the firm stopped payment. The assets were very trifling in comparison with the debts. And Sir Walter Scott was found on their paper to the frightful amount of one hundred thousand pounds!

His conduct on the occasion was precisely what was to have been anticipated from one who had declared on a similar, though much less appalling conjuncture, "I am always ready to make any sacrifices to do justice to my engagements, and would rather sell any thing, or every thing, than be less than a true man to the world." He put up his house and furniture in town at auction; delivered over his personal effects at Abbotsford, his plate, books, furniture, &c., to be held in trust for his creditors (the estate itself had been recently secured to his son, on occasion of his marriage); and bound himself to discharge a certain amount annually of the liabilities of the insolvent firm. He then, with his characteristic energy, set about the performance of his Herculean task. He took lodgings in a third-rate house in St. David's Street; saw but little company; abridged the hours usually devoted to his meals and his family; gave up his ordinary exercise; and, in short, adopted the severe habits of a regular Grub Street stipendiary.

"For many years," he said to Mr. Gillies, "I have been accustomed to hard work, because I found it a pleasure; now, with all due respect for Falstaff's principle, 'nothing on compulsion,' I certainly will not shrink from work because it has become necessary."

One of his first tasks was his "Life of Buonaparte," achieved in the space of thirteen months. For this he re-

ceived fourteen thousand pounds, about eleven hundred per month; not a bad bargain, either, as it proved, for the publishers. The two first volumes of the nine which make up the English edition, were a *rifacimento* of what he had before compiled for the "Annual Register." With every allowance for the inaccuracies, and the excessive expansion incident to such a flashing rapidity of execution, the work, taking into view the broad range of its topics, its shrewd and sagacious reflections, and the free, bold, and picturesque coloring of its narration,—and, above all, considering *the brief time in which it was written*,—is indisputably one of the most remarkable monuments of genius and industry, perhaps the most remarkable, ever recorded.

Scott's celebrity made every thing that fell from him, however trifling,—the dew-drops from the lion's mane,—of value. But none of the many adventures he embarked in, or rather set afloat, proved so profitable as the republication of his novels, with his notes and illustrations. As he felt his own strength in the increasing success of his labors, he appears to have relaxed somewhat from them, and to have again resumed somewhat of his ancient habits, and, in a mitigated degree, his ancient hospitality. But still his exertions were too severe, and pressed heavily on the springs of health, already deprived by age of their former elasticity and vigor. At length, in 1831, he was overtaken by one of those terrible shocks of paralysis, which seem to have been constitutional in his family, but which, with more precaution, and under happier auspices, might, doubtless, have been postponed, if not wholly averted. At this time he had, in the short space of little more than five years, by his sacrifices and efforts, discharged about two-thirds of the debt for which he was responsible; an astounding result, wholly unparalleled in the history of letters! There is something inexpressibly painful in this spectacle of a generous heart thus courageously contending with fortune, bearing up against the tide with uncon-

querable spirit, and finally overwhelmed by it, just within reach of shore.

The rest of his story is one of humiliation and sorrow. He was induced to make a voyage to the Continent, to try the effect of a more genial climate. Under the sunny sky of Italy, he seemed to gather new strength for a while. But his eye fell with indifference on the venerable monuments, which, in better days, would have kindled all his enthusiasm. The invalid sighed for his own home at Abbotsford. The heat of the weather, and the fatigue of rapid travel, brought on another shock, which reduced him to a state of deplorable imbecility. In this condition, he returned to his own halls, where the sight of early friends, and of the beautiful scenery, the creation, as it were, of his own hands, seemed to impart a gleam of melancholy satisfaction, which soon, however, sunk into insensibility. To his present situation might well be applied the exquisite verses which he indited on another melancholy occasion:

"Yet not the landscape to mine eye
Bears those bright hues that once it bore;
Though evening, with her richest dye,
Flames o'er the hills of Ettrick's shore.

"With listless look along the plain
I see Tweed's silver current glide,
And coldly mark the holy fane
Of Melrose rise in ruined pride.

"The quiet lake, the balmy air,
The hill, the stream, the tower, the tree,—
Are they still such as once they were,
Or is the dreary change in me?"

Providence, in its mercy, did not suffer the shattered frame long to outlive the glorious spirit which had informed it. He breathed his last on the 21st of September, 1832. His

remains were deposited, as he had always desired, in the hoary abbey of Dryburgh; and the pilgrim, from many a distant clime, shall repair to the consecrated spot, so long as the reverence for exalted genius and worth shall survive in the human heart.

This sketch, brief as we could make it, of the literary history of Sir Walter Scott, has extended so far as to leave but little space for—what Lockhart's volumes afford ample materials for—his personal character. Take it for all and all, it is not too much to say, that this character is probably the most remarkable on record. There is no man, that we now recall, of historical celebrity, who combined, in so eminent a degree, the highest qualities of the moral, the intellectual, and the physical. He united in his own character, what hitherto had been found incompatible. Though a poet, and living in an ideal world, he was an exact, methodical man of business; though achieving with the most wonderful fertility of genius, he was patient and laborious; a mousing antiquarian, yet with the most active interest in the present, and whatever was going on around him; with a strong turn for a roving life, and military adventure, he was yet chained to his desk more hours, at some periods of his life, than a monkish recluse; a man with a heart as capacious as his head; a Tory, brim full of Jacobitism, yet full of sympathy and unaffected familiarity with all classes, even the humblest; a successful author, without pedantry, and without conceit; one, indeed, at the head of the republic of letters, and yet with a lower estimate of letters, as compared with other intellectual pursuits, than was ever hazarded before.

The first quality of his character, or rather that which forms the basis of it, as of all great characters, was his energy. We see it, in his early youth, triumphing over the impediments of nature, and in spite of lameness, making him conspicuous in every sort of athletic exercise,—clambering up dizzy precipices, wading through treacherous fords, and

performing feats of pedestrianism, that make one's joints ache to read of. As he advanced in life, we see the same force of purpose turned to higher objects. A striking example occurs in his organization of the journals and the publishing house in opposition to Constable. In what Herculean drudgery did not this latter business, in which he undertook to supply matter for the nimble press of Ballantyne, involve him! While, in addition to his own concerns, he had to drag along, by his solitary momentum, a score of heavier undertakings, that led Lockhart to compare him to a steam-engine, with a train of coal-wagons hitched on to it. "Yes," said Scott, laughing, and making a crashing cut with his axe, (for they were felling larches,) "and there was a cursed lot of dung-carts too."

We see the same powerful energies triumphing over disease, at a later period, when, indeed, nothing but a resolution to get the better of it enabled him to do so. "Be assured," he remarked to Mr. Gillies, "that if pain could have prevented my application to literary labor, not a page of Ivanhoe would have been written. Now if I had given way to mere feelings, and ceased to work, it is a question whether the disorder might not have taken a deeper root, and become incurable." But the most extraordinary instance of this trait, is the readiness with which he assumed, and the spirit with which he carried through, till his mental strength broke down under it, the gigantic task imposed on him by the failure of Constable.

It mattered little, indeed, what the nature of the task was, whether it were organizing an opposition to a political faction, or a troop of cavalry to resist invasion, or a medley of wild Highlanders and Edinburgh cockneys to make up a royal puppet-show,—a loyal celebration,—for "His Most Sacred Majesty,"—he was the master-spirit that gave the cue to the whole *dramatis personæ*. This potent impulse showed itself in the thoroughness with which he prescribed, not merely the

general orders, but the execution of the minutest details, in his own person. Thus all around him was the creation, as it were, of his individual exertion. His lands waved with forests, planted with his own hands, and, in process of time, cleared by his own hands. He did not lay the stones in mortar, exactly, for his whimsical castles; but he seems to have superintended the operation, from the foundation to the battlements. The antique relics, the curious works of art, the hangings and furniture, even, with which his halls were decorated, were specially contrived or selected by him; and, to read his letters at this time to his friend Terry, one might fancy himself perusing the correspondence of an upholsterer, so exact and technical is he in his instructions. We say this not in disparagement of his great qualities. It is only the more extraordinary; for, while he stooped to such trifles, he was equally thorough in matters of the highest moment. It was a trait of character.

Another quality, which, like the last, seems to have given the tone to his character, was his social or benevolent feelings. His heart was an unfailing fountain, which not merely the distresses, but the joys, of his fellow creatures made to flow like water. In early life, and possibly sometimes in later, high spirits, and a vigorous constitution, led him occasionally to carry his social propensities into convivial excess. But he never was in danger of the habitual excess to which a vulgar mind,—and sometimes, alas! one more finely tuned,—abandons itself. Indeed, with all his conviviality, it was not the sensual relish, but the social, which acted on him. He was neither *gourmé* nor *gourmand*; but his social meetings were endeared to him by the free interchange of kindly feelings with his friends. La Bruyère says, (and it is odd he should have found it out in Louis the Fourteenth's court,) "the heart has more to do than the head with the pleasures, or rather promoting the pleasures of society;" "Un homme est d'un meilleur commerce dans la société par le cœur que par

l'esprit." If report, the report of travellers, be true, we Americans, at least the New-Englanders, are too much perplexed with the cares and crosses of life, to afford many genuine specimens of this *bonhommie*. However this may be, we all, doubtless, know some such character, whose shining face, the index of a cordial heart, radiant with beneficent pleasure, diffuses its own exhilarating glow wherever it appears. Rarely, indeed, is this precious quality found united with the most exalted intellect. Whether it be that Nature, chary of her gifts, does not care to shower too many of them on one head; or, that the public admiration has led the man of intellect to set too high a value on himself, or at least his own pursuits, to take an interest in the inferior concerns of others; or, that the fear of compromising his dignity puts him "on points" with those who approach him; or, whether, in truth, the very magnitude of his own reputation throws a freezing shadow over us little people in his neighbourhood;—whatever be the cause, it is too true that the highest powers of mind are very often deficient in the only one which can make the rest of much worth in society, —the power of pleasing.

Scott was not one of these little great. His was not one of those dark-lantern visages, which concentrate all their light on their own path, and are black as midnight to all about them. He had a ready sympathy, a word of contagious kindness, or cordial greeting for all. His manners, too, were of a kind to dispel the icy reserve and awe, which his great name was calculated to inspire. His frank address was a sort of *open sesame* to every heart. He did not deal in sneers, the poisoned weapons, which come not from the head, as the man who launches them is apt to think, but from an acid heart, or perhaps an acid stomach, a very common laboratory of such small artillery. Neither did Scott amuse the company with parliamentary harangues, or metaphysical disquisitions. His conversation was of the narrative kind, not

formal, but as casually suggested by some passing circumstance or topic, and thrown in by way of illustration. He did not repeat himself, however, but continued to give his anecdotes such variations, by rigging them out in a new "cocked hat and walking-cane," as he called it, that they never tired like the thrice-told tale of a chronic *raconteur*. He allowed others, too, to take their turn, and thought with the Dean of St. Patrick's,

> "Carve to all, but just enough,
> Let them neither starve nor stuff;
> And that you may have your due,
> Let your neighbours carve for you."

He relished a good joke, from whatever quarter it came, and was not over-dainty in his manner of testifying his satisfaction. "In the full tide of mirth he did indeed laugh the heart's laugh," says Mr. Adolphus. "Give me an honest laugher," said Scott himself, on another occasion, when a buckram man of fashion had been paying him a visit at Abbotsford. His manners, free from affectation or artifice of any sort, exhibited the spontaneous movements of a kind disposition, subject to those rules of good breeding which Nature herself might have dictated. In this way he answered his own purposes admirably, as a painter of character, by putting every man in good humour with himself; in the same manner as a cunning portrait-painter amuses his sitters with such store of fun and anecdote as may throw them off their guard, and call out the happiest expressions of their countenances.

Scott, in his wide range of friends and companions, does not seem to have been over-fastidious. In the instance of John Ballantyne, it has exposed him to some censure. Indeed, a more worthless fellow never hung on the skirts of a great man; for he did not take the trouble to throw a decent veil over the grossest excesses. But then, he had been the

school-boy friend of Scott; had grown up with him in a sort of dependence; a relation which begets a kindly feeling, in the party that confers the benefits at least. How strong it was in him, may be inferred from his remark at his funeral. "I feel," said Scott, mournfully, as the solemnity was concluded, "I feel as if there would be less sunshine for me, from this day forth." It must be admitted, however, that his intimacy with little Rigdumfunnidos, whatever apology it may find in Scott's heart, was not very creditable to his taste.

But the benevolent principle showed itself not merely in words, but in the more substantial form of actions. How many are the cases recorded of indigent merit, which he drew from obscurity, and almost warmed into life, by his own generous and most delicate patronage. Such were the cases, among others, of Leyden, Weber, Hogg. How often and how cheerfully did he supply such literary contributions as were solicited by his friends,—and they taxed him pretty liberally,—amidst all the pressure of business, and at the height of his fame, when his hours were golden hours indeed to him. In the more vulgar and easier forms of charity, he did not stint his hand, though, instead of direct assistance, he preferred to enable others to assist themselves; in this way fortifying their good habits, and relieving them from the sense of personal degradation.

But the place where his benevolent impulses found their proper theatre for expansion, was his own home; surrounded by a happy family, and dispensing all the hospitalities of a great feudal proprietor. "There are many good things in life," he says, in one of his letters, "whatever satirists and misanthropes may say to the contrary, but probably the best of all, next to a conscience void of offence (without which, by the by, they can hardly exist), are the quiet exercise and enjoyment of the social feelings, in which we are at once happy ourselves, and the cause of happiness to them who are dearest to us." Every page of the work, almost, shows us how inti-

mately he blended himself with the pleasures and the pursuits of his own family, watched over the education of his children, shared in their rides, their rambles, and sports, losing no opportunity of kindling in their young minds a love of virtue, and honorable principles of action. He delighted too to collect his tenantry around him, multiplying holidays, when young and old might come together under his roof-tree, when the jolly punch was liberally dispensed by himself and his wife among the elder people, and the *Hogmanay* cakes and pennies were distributed among the young ones; while his own children mingled in the endless reels and hornpipes on the earthen floor, and the *laird* himself, mixing in the groups of merry faces, had "his private joke for every old wife or 'gausie carle,' his arch compliment for the ear of every bonny lass, and his hand and his blessing for the head of every little *Eppie Daidle* from Abbotstown or Broomylees." "Sir Walter," said one of his old retainers, "speaks to every man as if he were his blood-relation." No wonder that they should have returned this feeling with something warmer than blood-relations usually do. Mr. Gillies tells an anecdote of the Ettrick Shepherd, showing how deep a root such feelings, notwithstanding his rather odd way of expressing them, sometimes, had taken in his honest nature. "Mr. James Ballantyne, walking home with him one evening from Scott's, where, by the by, Hogg had gone uninvited, happened to observe, 'I do not at all like this illness of Scott's. I have often seen him look jaded of late, and am afraid it is serious.' 'Haud your tongue, or I'll gar you measure your length on the pavement!' replied Hogg. 'You fause, down-hearted loon, that you are; ye daur to speak as if Scott were on his death-bed! It cannot be, it *must* not be! I will not suffer you to speak that gait.' The sentiment was like that of Uncle Toby at the bed-side of Le Fevre; and, at these words, the Shepherd's voice became suppressed with emotion."

But Scott's sympathies were not confined to his species;

and if he treated them like blood-relations, he treated his brute followers like personal friends. Every one remembers old Maida, and faithful Camp; the "dear old friend," whose loss cost him a dinner. Mr. Gillies tells us, that he went into his study on one occasion, when he was winding off his "Vision of Don Rederick." "'Look here,' said the poet, 'I have just begun to copy over the rhymes that you heard to-day, and applauded so much. Return to supper, if you can; only don't be late, as you perceive we keep early hours, and Wallace will not suffer me to rest after six in the morning. Come, good dog, and help the poet.' At this hint Wallace seated himself upright on a chair next his master, who offered him a newspaper, which he directly seized, looking very wise, and holding it firmly and contentedly in his mouth. Scott looked at him with great satisfaction, for he was excessively fond of dogs. 'Very well,' said he, '*now* we shall get on.' And so I left them abruptly, knowing that my 'absence would be the best company.'" This fellowship, indeed, extended much further than to his canine followers, of which, including hounds, terriers, mastiffs, and mongrels, he had certainly a goodly assortment. We find, also, Grimalkin installed in a responsible post in the library, and out of doors pet hens, pet donkeys, and,—tell it not in Judæa,—a pet pig!

Scott's sensibilities, though easily moved, and widely diffused, were warm and sincere. None shared more cordially in the troubles of his friends; but on all such occasions, with a true manly feeling, he thought less of mere sympathy than of the most effectual way for mitigating their sorrows. After a touching allusion, in one of his epistles, to his dear friend Erskine's death, he concludes, "I must turn to, and see what can be done about getting some pension for his daughters." In another passage, which may remind one of some of the exquisite touches in Jeremy Taylor, he indulges in the following beautiful strain of philosophy: "The last three or four

years have swept away more than half the friends with whom I lived in habits of great intimacy. So it must be with us

'When ance life's day draws near the gloamin',—

and yet we proceed with our plantations and plans as if any tree but the sad cypress would accompany us to the grave, where our friends have gone before us. It is the way of the world, however, and must be so; otherwise life would be spent in unavailing mourning for those whom we have lost. It is better to enjoy the society of those who remain to us." His well disciplined heart seems to have confessed the influence of this philosophy, in his most ordinary relations. "I can't help it," was a favorite maxim of his, "and therefore will not think about it; for that, at least, I *can* help."

Among his admirable qualities, must not be omitted a certain worldly sagacity or shrewdness, which is expressed as strongly as any individual trait can be, in some of his portraits, especially in the excellent one of him by Leslie. Indeed, his countenance would seem to exhibit, ordinarily, much more of Dandie Dinmont's benevolent shrewdness, than of the eye glancing from earth to heaven, which in fancy we assign to the poet, and which in some moods must have been his. This trait may be readily discerned in all his business transactions, which he managed with perfect knowledge of character, as well as of his own rights. No one knew better than he the market value of an article; and though he underrated his literary wares, as to their mere literary rank, he set as high a money value on them, and made as sharp a bargain, as any of the *trade* could have done. In his business concerns, indeed, he managed rather too much; or, to speak more correctly, was too fond of mixing up mystery in his transactions, which, like most mysteries, proved of little service to their author. Scott's correspondence, especially with his son, affords obvious examples of shrewdness, in the advice he gives as to his deportment in the novel situations and society, into which the young cornet was thrown.

Occasionally, indeed, in the cautious hints about etiquette and social observances, we are reminded of that ancient "arbiter elegantiarum," Lord Chesterfield; though, it must be confessed, there is throughout a high moral tone, which the noble lord did not very scrupulously affect.

Another feature in Scott's character was his loyalty; which, indeed, some people would extend into a more general deference to rank not royal. We do, indeed, meet with a tone of deference, occasionally, to the privileged orders (or rather privileged persons, as the King, his own Chief, &c., for to the mass of stars and garters he showed no such respect), which falls rather unpleasantly on the ear of a republican. But, independently of the feelings which should rightfully have belonged to him as the subject of a monarchy, and without which he must have been a false-hearted subject, his own were heightened by a poetical coloring, that mingled, in his mind, even with much more vulgar relations of life. At the opening of the regalia in Holyrood House, when the honest burgomaster deposited the crown on the head of one of the young ladies present, the good man probably saw nothing more in the dingy diadem than we should have seen, —a head-piece for a set of men no better than himself, and, if the old adage of a "dead lion" holds true, not quite so good. But to Scott's imagination other views were unfolded. "A thousand years their cloudy wings expanded" around him, and, in the dim visions of distant times, he beheld the venerable line of monarchs, who had swayed the councils of his country in peace, and led her armies in battle. The "golden round" became in his eye the symbol of his nation's glory; and, as he heaved a heavy oath from his heart, he left the room in agitation, from which he did not speedily recover. There was not a spice of affectation in this,—for who ever accused Scott of affectation?—but there was a good deal of poetry, the poetry of sentiment.

We have said that this feeling mingled in the more

common concerns of his life. His cranium, indeed, to judge from his busts, must have exhibited a strong development of the organ of veneration. He regarded with reverence every thing connected with antiquity. His establishment was on the feudal scale; his house was fashioned more after the feudal ages than his own; and even in the ultimate distribution of his fortune, although the circumstance of having made it himself relieved him from any legal necessity of contravening the suggestions of natural justice, he showed such attachment to the old aristocratic usage, as to settle nearly the whole of it on his eldest son.

The influence of this poetic sentiment is discernible in his most trifling acts, in his tastes, his love of the arts, his social habits. His museum, house, and grounds were adorned with relics, curious not so much from their workmanship, as their historic associations. It was the ancient fountain from Edinburgh, the Tolbooth lintels, the blunderbuss and spleughan of Rob Roy, the drinking cup of Prince Charlie, or the like. It was the same in the arts. The tunes he loved were not the refined and complex melodies of Italy, but the simple notes of his native minstrelsy, from the bagpipe of John of Skye, or from the harp of his own lovely and accomplished daughter. So also in painting. It was not the masterly designs of the great Flemish and Italian schools that adorned his walls, but some portrait of Claverhouse, or of Queen Mary, or of "glorious old John." In architecture, we see the same spirit in the singular "romance of stone and lime," which may be said to have been his own device, down to the minutest details of its finishing. We see it, again, in the joyous celebrations of his feudal tenantry, the good old festivals, the Hogmanay, the Kirn, &c., long fallen into desuetude, when the old Highland piper sounded the same wild pibroch that had so often summoned the clans together, for war or for vassail, among the fastnesses of the mountains. To the same source, in fine, may be traced the feelings of supersti-

tion, which seemed to hover round Scott's mind like some "strange, mysterious dream," giving a romantic coloring to his conversation and his writings, but rarely, if ever, influencing his actions. It was a poetic sentiment.

Scott was a Tory to the backbone. Had he come into the world half a century sooner, he would, no doubt, have made a figure under the banner of the Pretender. He was at no great pains to disguise his political creed; witness his jolly drinking song on the acquittal of Lord Melville. This was verse; but his prose is not much more qualified. "As for Whiggery in general,' he says, in one of his letters, "I can only say, that as no man can be said to be utterly overset until his rump has been higher than his head, so I cannot read in history of any free state which has been brought to slavery, until the rascal and uninstructed populace had had their short hour of anarchical government, which naturally leads to the stern repose of military despotism. * * * With these convictions, I am very jealous of Whiggery, under all modifications; and I must say, my acquaintance with the total want of principle in some of its warmest professors does not tend to recommend it." With all this, however, his Toryism was not, practically, of that sort, which blunts a man's sensibilities for those who are not of the same porcelain clay with himself. No man, Whig or Radical, ever had less of this pretension, or treated his inferiors with greater kindness, and, indeed, familiarity; a circumstance noticed by every visitor at his hospitable mansion, who saw him strolling round his grounds, taking his pinch of snuff out of the mull of some "grey-haired old hedger," or leaning on honest Tom Purdie's shoulder, and taking sweet counsel as to the right method of thinning a plantation. But, with all this familiarity, no man was better served by his domestics. It was the service of love; the only service that power cannot command, and money cannot buy.

Akin to the feelings of which we have been speaking, was

the truly chivalrous sense of honor, which stamped his whole conduct. We do not mean that Hotspur honor, which is roused only by the drum and fife,—though he says of himself, "I like the sound of a drum as well as Uncle Toby ever did,"—but that honor which is deep-seated in the heart of every true gentleman, shrinking with sensitive delicacy from the least stain, or imputation of a stain on his faith. "If we lose everything else," writes he, on a trying occasion, to a friend who was not so nice in this particular, "we will at least keep our honor unblemished." It reminds one of the pithy epistle of that kindred chivalrous spirit, Francis the First, to his mother, from the unlucky field of Pavia; "Tout est perdu, fors l'honneur." Scott's latter years furnished a noble commentary on the sincerity of his manly principles.

Little is said directly of his religious sentiments in the biography. They seem to have harmonized well with his political. He was a member of the English Church, a stanch champion of established forms, and a sturdy enemy to every thing that savored of the sharp twang of Puritanism. On this ground, indeed, the youthful Sampson used to wrestle manfully with worthy Dominie Mitchell, who, no doubt, furnished many a screed of doctrine for the Rev. Peter Poundtext, Master Nehemiah Holdenough, and other lights of the Covenant. Scott was no friend to cant, under any form. But, whatever were his speculative opinions, in practice his heart overflowed with that charity which is the life-spring of our religion. And whenever he takes occasion to allude to the subject directly, he testifies a deep reverence for the truths of revelation, as well as for its divine Original.

Whatever estimate be formed of Scott's moral qualities, his intellectual were of a kind which well entitled him to the epithet conferred on Lope de Vega, "monstruo de naturaleza," "a miracle of nature." His mind, indeed, did not seem to be subjected to the same laws which control the rest of his species. His memory, as is usual, was the first of his

powers fully developed. While an urchin at school he could repeat whole cantos, he says, of Ossian and of Spenser. In riper years we are constantly meeting with similar feats of his achievement. Thus, on one occasion, he repeated the whole of a poem in some penny Magazine, incidentally alluded to, which he had not seen since he was a schoolboy. On another, when the Ettrick Shepherd was trying ineffectually to fish up from his own recollections some scraps of a ballad he had himself manufactured, years before, Scott called to him, "Take your pencil, Jemmy, and I will tell it to you, word for word;" and he accordingly did so. But it is needless to multiply examples of feats so startling as to look almost like the tricks of a conjuror.

What is most extraordinary is, that while he acquired with such facility, that the bare perusal, or the repetition of a thing once to him, was sufficient, he yet retained it with the greatest pertinacity. Other men's memories are so much jostled in the rough and tumble of life, that most of the facts get sifted out, nearly as fast as they are put in; so that we are in the same pickle with those unlucky daughters of Danaus, of schoolboy memory, obliged to spend the greater part of the time in replenishing. But Scott's memory seemed to be hermetically sealed, suffering nothing once fairly in to leak out again. This was of immense service to him, when he took up the business of authorship; as his whole multifarious stock of facts, whether from books or observation, became in truth his stock in trade, ready furnished to his hands. This may explain in part,—though it is not less marvellous,—the cause of his rapid execution of works, often replete with rare and curious information. The labor, the preparation, had been already completed. His whole life had been a business of preparation. When he ventured, as in the case of "Rokeby" and of "Quentin Durward," on ground with which he had not been familiar, we see how industriously he set about new acquisitions.

In most of the prodigies of memory which we have ever known, the overgrowth of that faculty seems to have been attained at the expense of all the others. But in Scott, the directly opposite power of the imagination,—the inventive power,—was equally strongly developed, and at the same early age. For we find him renowned for story-craft while at school. How many a delightful fiction, indeed, warm with the flush of ingenuous youth, did he not throw away on the ears of thoughtless childhood, which, had they been duly registered, might now have amused children of a larger growth. We have seen Scott's genius in its prime and its decay. The frolic graces of childhood are alone wanting.

The facility with which he threw his ideas into language, was also remarked very early. One of his first ballads, and a long one, was dashed off at the dinner table. His "Lay" was written at the rate of a canto a week. "Waverley," or rather the last two volumes of it, cost the evenings of a summer month. Who that has ever read the account can forget the movements of that mysterious hand, as descried by the two students from the window of a neighbouring attic, throwing off sheet after sheet, with untiring rapidity, of the pages destined to immortality? Scott speaks pleasantly enough of this marvellous facility, in a letter to his friend Morritt. "When once I set my pen to the paper, it will walk fast enough. I am sometimes tempted to leave it alone, and see whether it will not write as well without the assistance of my head as with it. A hopeful prospect for the reader."

As to the time and place of composition, he appears to have been nearly indifferent. He possessed entire power of abstraction, and it mattered little whether he were nailed to his clerk's desk, under the drowsy eloquence of some long-winded barrister, or dashing his horse into the surf on Portobello sands, or rattling in a postchaise, or amidst the hum of guests in his overflowing halls at Abbotsford,—it mattered

not, the same well adjusted little packet, "nicely corded and sealed," was sure to be ready, at the regular time, for the Edinburgh mail. His own account of his composition, to a friend who asked when he found time for it, is striking enough. "O," said Scott, "I lie *simmering* over things for an hour or so before I get up,—and there's the time I am dressing to overhaul my half-sleeping, half-waking *projet de chapitre*,—and when I get the paper before me it commonly runs off pretty easily. Besides, I often take a doze in the plantations, and, while Tom marks out a dyke or a drain, as I have directed, one's fancy may be running its ain riggs in some other world." Never indeed did this sort of simmering produce such a splendid bill of fare.

The quality of the material, under such circumstances, is, in truth, the great miracle of the whole. The execution of so much work, as a mere feat of penmanship, would, undoubtedly, be very extraordinary; but, as a mere scrivener's miracle, would be hardly worth recording. It is a sort of miracle that is every day performing under our own eyes, as it were, by Messrs. James, Bulwer, and Co., who, in all the various staples of "comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral," &c., &c., supply their own market and ours too with all that can be wanted. In Spain and in Italy, too, we may find abundance of *improvvisatori* and *improvvisatrici*, who perform miracles of the same sort, in verse, too, in languages whose vowel terminations make it very easy for the thoughts to tumble into rhyme, without any malice prepense. Governor Raffles, in his account of Java, tells us of a splendid avenue of trees before his house, which in the course of a year shot up to the height of forty feet. But who shall compare the brief, transitory splendors of a fungus vegetation with the mighty monarch of the forest, sending his roots deep into the heart of the earth, and his branches, amid storm and sunshine, to the heavens? And is not the latter the true emblem of Scott? For who can doubt

that his prose creations at least will gather strength with time, living on through succeeding generations, even when the language in which they are written, like those of Greece and Rome, shall cease to be a living language?

The only writer deserving, in these respects, to be named with Scott, is Lope de Vega, who in his own day held as high a rank in the republic of letters as our great contemporary. The beautiful dramas which he threw off for the entertainment of the capital, and whose success drove Cervantes from the stage, outstripped the abilities of an amanuensis to copy. His intimate friend, Montalvan, one of the most popular and prolific authors of the time, tells us, that he undertook with Lope once to supply the theatre with a comedy,—in verse, and in three acts, as the Spanish dramas usually were,—at a very short notice. In order to get through his half as soon as his partner, he rose by two in the morning, and at eleven had completed it; an extraordinary feat, certainly, since a play extended to between thirty and forty pages, of a hundred lines each. Walking into the garden he found his brother poet pruning an orange tree. "Well, how do you get on?" said Montalvan. "Very well," answered Lope. "I rose betimes,—at five; and after I had got through, eat my breakfast; since which I have written a letter of fifty triplets, and watered the whole of the garden, which has tired me a good deal."

But a little arithmetic will best show the comparative fertility of Scott and Lope de Vega. It is so germane to the present matter, that we shall make no apology for transcribing here some computations from our last July number; and as few of our readers, we suspect, have the air-tight memory of Sir Walter, we doubt not that enough of it has escaped them by this time to excuse us from equipping it with one of those "cocked hats and walking-sticks," with which he furbished up an old story.

"It is impossible to state the results of Lope de Vega's labours in any form that will not powerfully strike the imagination. Thus, he has left twenty-one million three hundred thousand verses in print, besides a mass of manuscript. He furnished the theatre, according to the statement of his intimate friend, Montalvan, with eighteen hundred regular plays, and four hundred *autos*, or religious dramas,—all acted. He composed, according to his own statement, more than one hundred comedies in the almost incredible space of twenty-four hours each; and a comedy averaged between two and three thousand verses, great part of them rhymed, and interspersed with sonnets, and other more difficult forms of versification. He lived seventy-two years; and supposing him to have employed fifty of that period in composition, although he filled a variety of engrossing vocations during that time, he must have averaged a play a week, to say nothing of twenty-one volumes, quarto, of miscellaneous works, including five epics, written in his leisure moments, and all now in print!

"The only achievements we can recall in literary history, bearing any resemblance to, though falling far short of this, are those of our illustrious contemporary, Sir Walter Scott. The complete edition of his works, recently advertised by Murray, with the addition of two volumes, of which Murray has not the copyright, probably contains ninety volumes, small octavo. [To these should further be added, a large supply of matter for the Edinburgh Annual Register, as well as other anonymous contributions.] Of these, forty-eight volumes of novels, and twenty-one of history and biography, were produced between 1814 and 1831, or in seventeen years. These would give an average of four volumes a year, or one for every three months during the whole of that period; to which must be added twenty-one volumes of poetry and prose, previously published. The mere mechanical execution of so much work, both in his case and Lope de Vega's, would seem to be scarce possible, in the limits assigned. Scott, too, was as variously occupied in other ways as his Spanish rival; and probably, from the social hospitality of his life, spent a much larger portion of his time in no literary occupation at all."

Of all the wonderful dramatic creations of Lope de Vega's genius, what now remains? Two or three plays only keep possession of the stage, and few, very few, are still read with pleasure in the closet. They have never been collected into a uniform edition, and are now met with in scattered sheets

only on the shelves of some mousing bookseller, or collected in miscellaneous parcels in the libraries of the curious.

Scott, with all his facility of execution, had none of that pitiable affectation, sometimes found in men of genius, who think that the possession of this quality may dispense with regular, methodical habits of study. He was most economical of time. He did not, like Voltaire, speak of it as "a terrible thing that so much time should be wasted in talking." He was too little of a pedant, and far too benevolent, not to feel that there are other objects worth living for, than mere literary fame. But he grudged the waste of time on merely frivolous and heartless objects. "As for dressing, when we are quite alone," he remarked one day to Mr. Gillies, whom he had taken home with him to a family dinner, "it is out of the question. Life is not long enough for such fiddle-faddle." In the early part of his life he worked late at night. But subsequently, from a conviction of the superior healthiness of early rising, as well as the desire to secure, at all hazards, a portion of the day for literary labor, he rose at five, the year round; no small effort, as any one will admit, who has seen the pain and difficulty which a regular bird of night finds in reconciling his eyes to daylight. He was scrupulously exact, moreover, in the distribution of his hours. In one of his letters to his friend Terry, the player, replete, as usual, with advice that seems to flow equally from the head and the heart, he says, in reference to the practice of *dawdling* away one's time, "A habit of the mind it is which is very apt to beset men of intellect and talent, especially when their time is not regularly filled up, but left to their own arrangement. But it is like the ivy round the oak, and ends by limiting, if it does not destroy, the power of manly and necessary exertion. I must love a man so well to whom I offer such a word of advice, that I will not apologize for it, but expect to hear you are become *as regular as a Dutch clock,—hours, quarters, minutes, all marked and appropriated.*"

With the same emphasis he inculcates the like habits on his son. If any man might dispense with them, it was surely Scott. But he knew that without them the greatest powers of mind will run to waste, and water but the desert.

Some of the literary opinions of Scott are singular, considering, too, the position he occupied in the world of letters. "I promise you," he says, in an epistle to an old friend, "my oaks will outlast my laurels; and I piqûe myself more on my compositions for manure, than on any other compositions to which I was ever accessary." This may seem *badinage*. But he repeatedly, both in writing and conversation, places literature, as a profession, below other intellectual professions; and especially the military. The Duke of Wellington, the representative of the last, seems to have drawn from him a very extraordinary degree of deference, which, we cannot but think, smacks a little of that strong relish for gunpowder, which he avows in himself.

It is not very easy to see on what this low estimate of literature rested. As a profession, it has too little in common with more active ones, to afford much ground for running a parallel. The soldier has to do with externals; and his contests and triumphs are over matter, in its various forms, whether of man or material nature. The poet deals with the bodiless forms of air, of fancy lighter than air. His business is contemplative; the other's is active, and depends for its success on strong moral energy, and presence of mind. He must, indeed, have genius of the highest order, to effect his own combinations, anticipate the movements of his enemy, and dart with eagle eye on his vulnerable point. But who shall say that this practical genius, if we may so term it, is to rank higher in the scale than the creative power of the poet, the spark from the mind of divinity itself?

The orator might seem to afford better ground for comparison, since, though his theatre of action is abroad, he may be said to work with much the same tools as the writer. Yet,

how much of his success depends on qualities other than intellectual. "Action," said the father of eloquence, "action, action, are the three most essential things to an orator." How much, indeed, depends on the look, the gesture, the magical tones of voice, modulated to the passions he has stirred; and how much on the contagious sympathies of the audience itself, which drown every thing like criticism in the overwhelming tide of emotion. If any one would know how much, let him, after patiently standing

> "till his feet throb,
> And his head thumps, to feed upon the breath
> Of patriots bursting with heroic rage,"

read the same speech in the columns of a morning newspaper, or in the well concocted report of the orator himself. The productions of the writer are subjected to a fiercer ordeal. He has no excited sympathies of numbers to hurry his readers along over his blunders. He is scanned in the calm silence of the closet. Every flower of fancy seems here to wilt under the rude breath of criticism; every link in the chain of argument is subjected to the touch of prying scrutiny, and if there be the least flaw in it, it is sure to be detected. There is no tribunal so stern as the secret tribunal of a man's own closet, far removed from all the sympathetic impulses of humanity. Surely there is no form in which *intellect* can be exhibited to the world so completely stripped of all adventitious aids, as the form of written composition. But, says the practical man, let us estimate things by their utility. "You talk of the poems of Homer," said a mathematician, "but, after all, what do they *prove?*" A question which involves an answer somewhat too voluminous for the tail of an article. But, if the poems of Homer were, as Heeren asserts, the principal bond which held the Grecian states together, and gave them a national feeling, they "prove," more than all the arithmeticians of Greece,—and

there were many cunning ones in it,—ever did. The results of military skill are, indeed, obvious. The soldier, by a single victory, enlarges the limits of an empire; he may do more,—he may achieve the liberties of a nation, or roll back the tide of barbarism, ready to overwhelm them. Wellington was placed in such a position, and nobly did he do his work,—or rather, he was placed at the head of such a gigantic moral and physical apparatus, as enabled him to do it. With his own unassisted strength, of course, he could have done nothing. But it is on his own solitary resources that the great writer is to rely. And yet, who shall say that the triumphs of Wellington have been greater than those of Scott,—whose works are familiar as household words to every fireside in his own land, from the castle to the cottage; have crossed oceans and deserts, and, with healing on their wings, found their way to the remotest regions; have helped to form the character, until his own mind may be said to be incorporated into those of hundreds of thousands of his fellowmen? Who is there, that has not, at some time or other, felt the heaviness of his heart lightened, his pains mitigated, and his bright moments of life made still brighter, by the magical touches of his genius? And shall we speak of his victories as less real, less serviceable to humanity, less truly glorious, than those of the greatest captain of his day? The triumphs of the warrior are bounded by the narrow theatre of his own age. But those of a Scott, or a Shakspeare, will be renewed, with greater and greater lustre, in ages yet unborn, when the victorious chieftain shall be forgotten, or shall live only in the song of the minstrel, and the page of the chronicler.

But, after all, this sort of parallel is not very gracious, nor very philosophical; and, to say truth, is somewhat foolish. We have been drawn into it by the not random, but very deliberate, and, in our poor judgment, very disparaging estimate by Scott, of his own vocation; and as we have taken

the trouble to write it, our readers will excuse us from blotting it out. There is too little ground for the respective parties to stand on, for a parallel. As to the pedantic *cui bono* standard, it is impossible to tell the final issues of a single act; how can we then hope to tell those of a course of action? As for the *honor* of different vocations, there never was a truer sentence than the stale one of Pope,—stale now because it is so true,—

"Act well your part, there all the honor lies."

And it is the just boast of our own country, that in no civilized nation is the force of this philanthropic maxim so nobly illustrated, as in ours;—thanks to our glorious institutions.

A great cause, probably, of Scott's low estimate of letters, was the facility with which he wrote himself. What costs us little, we are apt to prize little. If diamonds were as common as pebbles, and gold dust as any other, who would stoop to gather them? It was the prostitution of his muse, by the by, for this same gold dust, which brought a sharp rebuke on the poet from Lord Byron, in his "English Bards":

"For this we spurn Apollo's venal son;"

a coarse cut, and the imputation about as true as most satire, —that is, not true at all. This was indited in his lordship's earlier days, when he most chivalrously disclaimed all purpose of bartering his rhymes for gold. He lived long enough, however, to weigh his literary wares in as nice a money-balance, as any more vulgar manufacturer ever did. And, in truth, it would be ridiculous if the produce of the brain should not bring its price, in this form, as well as any other;—there is little danger, we imagine, of finding too much gold in the bowels of Parnassus.

Scott took a more sensible view of things. In a letter to Ellis, written soon after the publication of the "Minstrelsy," he observes, "People may say this and that of the pleasure

of fame, or of profit, as a motive of writing, I think the only pleasure is in the actual exertion and research; and I would no more write upon any other terms, than I would hunt merely to dine upon hare-soup. At the same time, if credit and profit came unlooked for, I would no more quarrel with them than with the soup." Even this declaration was somewhat more magnanimous than was warranted by his subsequent conduct. The truth is, he soon found out, especially after the Waverley vein had opened, that he had hit on a gold mine. The prodigious returns he got gave the whole thing the aspect of a speculation. Every new work was an adventure; and the proceeds naturally suggested the indulgence of the most extravagant schemes of expense, which, in their turn, stimulated him to fresh efforts. In this way, the "profits" became, whatever they might have been once, a principal incentive to, as they were the recompense of, exertion. His productions were cash articles, and were estimated by him more on the Hudibrastic rule of "the real worth of a thing," than by any fanciful standard of fame. He bowed with deference to the judgment of the booksellers, and trimmed his sails dexterously, as the "aura popularis" shifted. "If it is na weil bobbit," he writes to his printer, on turning out a less lucky novel, "we'll bobb it again." His muse was of that school who seek the greatest happiness of the greatest possible number. We can hardly imagine him invoking her, like Milton,

> "Still govern thou my song,
> Urania, and fit audience find, though few."

Still less can we imagine him, like the blind old bard, feeding his soul with visions of posthumous glory, and spinning out epics for five pounds apiece.

It is singular that Scott, although he set as high a money value on his productions as the most enthusiastic of the "trade" could have done, in a literary view, should have held

them so cheap. "Whatever others may be," he said, "I have never been a partizan of my own poetry; as John Wilkes declared, that, 'in the height of his success, he had himself never been a Wilkite.'" Considering the poet's popularity, this was but an indifferent compliment to the taste of his age. With all this disparagement of his own productions, however, Scott was not insensible to criticism. He says somewhere, indeed, that "if he had been conscious of a single vulnerable point in himself, he would not have taken up the business of writing." But on another occasion he writes, "I make it a rule never to read the attacks made upon me." And Captain Hall remarks, "He never reads the criticisms on his books; this I know, from the most unquestionable authority. Praise, he says, gives him no pleasure, and censure annoys him." Madame de Graffigny says, also, of Voltaire, "that he was altogether indifferent to praise, but the least word from his enemies drove him crazy." Yet both these authors banqueted on the sweets of panegyric as much as any who ever lived. They were in the condition of an epicure, whose palate has lost its relish for the dainty fare in which it has been so long revelling, without becoming less sensible to the annoyances of sharper and coarser flavors. It may afford some consolation to humble mediocrity, to the less fortunate votaries of the muse, that those who have reached the summit of Parnassus, are not much more contented with their condition, than those who are scrambling among the bushes at the bottom of the mountain. The fact seems to be, as Scott himself intimates more than once, that the joy is in the chase; whether in the prose or the poetry of life.

But it is high time to terminate our lucubrations; which, however imperfect and unsatisfactory, have already run to a length that must trespass on the patience of the reader. We rise from the perusal of these delightful volumes, with the same sort of melancholy feeling with which we wake from a

pleasant dream. "Bright eyes now closed in dust, gay voices for ever silenced," seem to haunt us as we write. The imagination reverts to Abbotsford,—the romantic and once brilliant Abbotsford,—the magical creation of *his* hands. We see its halls radiant with the hospitality of *his* benevolent heart; thronged with pilgrims from every land, assembled to pay homage at the shrine of genius; echoing to the blithe music of those festal holidays, when young and old met to renew the usages of the good old times.

"These were its charms,—but all these charms are fled."

Its courts are desolate, or trodden only by the foot of the stranger. The stranger sits under the shadows of the trees which his hand planted. The spell of the enchanter is dissolved. His wand is broken. And the mighty Minstrel himself now sleeps in the bosom of the peaceful scenes, embellished by his taste, and which his genius has made immortal.

WORDSWORTH.*

"The great poet of our times, Wordsworth, one of the few who are to live, has gone to common life, to the feelings of our universal nature, to the obscure and neglected portions of society, for beautiful and touching themes. Genius is not a creator, in the sense of fancying or feigning what does not exist. *Its distinction is, to discern more of truth than ordinary minds.* It sees, under disguises and humble forms, everlasting beauty. This it is the prerogative of Wordsworth to discern and reveal in the ordinary walks of life, in the common human heart. He has revealed the loveliness of the *primitive feelings* of the universal affections of the heart."—CHANNING.

THE imaginative literature of the present century is a subject which criticism has not yet exhausted. At the period in which its great works were produced, many causes prevented them from being judged in a spirit of fairness. The acknowledgment of an author's merit depended, to a great extent, on personal and political considerations. Malignity and partizanship both warped the straight line of analysis. The numerous disquisitions which have appeared, since these passions have been somewhat allayed, have still left room for individual diversities of opinion. We have thought that a view of the character and tendencies of the

* *The Complete Poetical Works of* WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. Philadelphia: James Kay, Jr., & Brother. 8vo. 1837.

imaginative literature of the present age, in connexion with the individual and poetical characters of its four great exponents, Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, and Scott, would not be distasteful to our readers. We have selected these from the large army of contemporary poets, because in this, as in other armies, we must look to the leaders for the direction of the march and the conduct of the war. We commence with Wordsworth.

Literature has its ebb and flow, its periods of plenty and barrenness, of progress and retrogression. At one time we observe a race of authors spring up, as if by magic, who reflect and modify current tastes and opinions, give a new energy to all departments of letters, become the founders of a school of literature, and trail after them an admiring body of disciples and imitators. But their influence gradually decays. The spirit that animated their writings dies out. New ideas and new ideals take possession of the national mind. Those of the school, who remain, copy their masters' manner, without catching any of their masters' soul. Then generally follows a period of mental sterility,—a weary waste in intellectual history, dotted by only a few spots of verdure and beauty. Soon, however, a reaction commences. The dulness and debility consequent upon a cringing and servile admiration of past merit gradually provoke the best natured "reading public" into wrath. A new order or development of literature supplants the old,—a literature more affected by contemporary events and opinions, more expressive of the advancing character of the people, more original and bold. This, again, when emancipated from the slavery of the past, exercises its tyranny upon the future.

These facts account in some degree for the wide diversities observable in the intellectual history of civilized nations. In one age, we find the loftiest genius, in another, the meanest mediocrity, in the high places of letters. Edmund Spenser, John Dryden, Colley Cibber, Henry James Pye, and Robert

Southey have all been poet-laureates of England. The age of Pericles, of Augustus, of Lorenzo de Medici, of Queen Anne, periods of peculiar brilliancy in literary annals, were succeeded by times in which imitation, rather than creation, was the poet's boast. A great author thus establishes a kind of despotism over his successors. The freedom of their minds is trammelled by the canons of taste deduced from his writings. Until imitation has run into a spiritless mannerism, and given over the domain of letters to elegant imbecility or galvanized common-place, it is rare that the reaction commences; and when it does occur, it is often accompanied by those wild excesses which stain most rebellions against established power.

Thus it was, in some degree, with that rebellion against what is absurdly called the correct school of poetry, which has occurred within the last fifty years. It is hardly possible for any person to contrast the torpid formality and florid feebleness, which characterized most of the current rhyme of the last half-century, with the vigor, the broad scope, the earnestness, the sensibility, the intellectual and moral power, which distinguish the poetry of the present age, without being led into an inquiry concerning the causes of so wide a difference. It seems as if the dead body of literature had been touched by the hand of an enchanter, and had sprung upon its feet. To whatever department of literature we turn we find it swarming with occupants. Signs of mental life and energy meet and reward the eye in every direction. Every thing we see tells us, that the paralysis which struck the inventive powers of the past generation has not benumbed the imagination of our own. The poet has once more ceased to worship fashion and metre, and returned to nature and truth. The scales have fallen from his eyes, and he can see; the fetters have dropped from his limbs, and he can move; the burden has passed away from his soul, and he can soar.

It is impossible to frame any general laws which shall comprehend all the phenomena that precede or accompany a change in the character of a national literature. But there were various causes, some obvious, some recondite, and all in harmony with historical truth, which undoubtedly influenced the character of the poetry that sprang up on the ruins of the critical and artificial school of the time of Queen Anne. That way of writing had miserably degenerated in the compositions of its disciples. All that was admirable in Pope, its great master, could not be reproduced. The keen, searching satire, the brilliant wit, the teeming fancy, the sharp compression of style, which characterized the little man of Twickenham, were beyond imitation; but the flow of his verse, and the artifice of his manner, were not so difficult of attainment. These merely required a good ear and an empty heart; two things which are wonderfully common in all ages. As a matter of course, poetry became feeble and melodious, refined and trite, heartless and genteel. Most of the poems formed on Pope's model made a smooth descent into that nothingness from which they had so daintily arisen, hardly attracting sufficient attention to "pay the expenses of their journey to oblivion." The last faint echo of the "Rape of the Lock" was given in the "Triumphs of Temper" of the "amiable" Hayley. During the sixty years which followed the death of Pope, the few good poems which have journeyed down to the present time can hardly be said to have been indebted to his example for any of their merits. They were angel visits, infrequent though celestial sights, to a generation dull and dead to high poetic feeling.

The revolution, however, came at last. The attention of men, sick of monotony and debility, was turned to the earlier and palmy days,—the true Augustan age of English literature,—to that wonderful band of authors which adorned the reign of Elizabeth,—to Shakspeare, Jonson, Fletcher, Spenser, and Bacon. The vast stores of meditation, imagin-

ation, and passion contained in the works of the elder dramatists were explored. The fine old English ballads, brimful of nature and truth, were placed side by side with the nerveless couplets of heroic rhymers. Burns and Cowper, each after his own way, had shown that there was something new to be said about nature and human life. The butterflies of the Della Cruscan school were broken on the wheel of Gifford's satire,—fit engine for such a work. Even the nonsensical sentimentalities imported from Germany indicated, that maudlin feeling and spurious energy were tolerated for the realities which they suggested as well as caricatured. Both in the work of demolition and in the blundering attempts at constructing anew, the same spirit was manifested.

The two principal causes of the change in the tone and character of literature were, probably, the French Revolution, and that tendency in the highest minds towards spiritualism, which was expressed in the revival of what is now vaguely called the "transcendental philosophy." These, likewise, gave the impulse to some of those agents in the work which we have before noted. Both exerted on the feelings and opinions of men a vast influence. Between the French Revolution, which was the child of French atheism and the philosophy which reacted against it, there seems, on the first glance, to be little connexion; yet no one can examine the poetry of the time without perceiving, that these two influences almost interpenetrate each other in their effect upon the national mind. They are seen in all the high imaginative literature which at all reflects the spirit of the age.

Of the influence of the "spiritual philosophy" it is difficult to speak here at sufficient length, or with any discrimination. It is a name applicable to a large number of systems, and often perversely applied to opinions which it does not cover. It is certain, however, that, during the period when poetry was most artificial and didactic, the current philosophy was far from being spiritual. Bolingbroke and Pope are the fit

representatives of the speculation and the imagination of their age. The "Essay on Man," in which the thoughts and arguments are known to be Bolingbroke's, is a meet philosophical counterpart to the "Essay on Criticism." Berkeley's system is hardly an exception to the rule, for he stands as much apart from his time as Milton does from the time of Charles the Second. The reaction in Scotland and other countries against materialism, may be said to have been occasioned by the necessities of a natural religion, and the want experienced of a philosophy which should comprehend all the elements of human nature. Both in philosophy and poetry, there was a demand for something which prevalent systems had overlooked. The spirit of transcendental speculation deeply infects the poetry of Wordsworth, Shelley, Coleridge, Keats, and Tennyson, and partly that of Byron. It is the inspiration of the most popular verse produced in our own country. Were Pope's "Essay on Man" and Longfellow's "Voices of the Night" published here for the first time to-morrow, the "Voices" would attract ten times as many listeners as the "Essay." The fertile fancy, harmonious numbers, and brilliant epigrammatic turns of Pope would not compensate for his lack of mystical charm. This change from the sensual to the super-sensual in poetry has not been unattended by abuses as well as beauties. To read some metrical productions of the crude dabblers in spiritualism is a worse physical infliction than the nightmare or the toothache.

Pure spiritualism, as a system of philosophy, imposes on external nature the laws of the understanding or the reason; poetry imposes on nature the laws of the imagination. Both make the inner world of the mind paramount to the external world of matter. The purest poetry is that in which the imagination either evolves from material objects the latent spiritual meaning they secrete, or superadds to those objects thoughts and feelings which the senses cannot perceive as residing in them. It thus transcends the sphere of the senses, and is, in

a measure, transcendental. No definition of poetry can be more incorrect than that which confines it to imitation, in the usual sense of the word. Even in descriptive poetry, the forms and colors of nature are not imitated, but represented. The mind that describes is always predominant in the description, and gives as much as it takes. Two true poets would probably give an essentially different description of the same landscape. In truth, in the hands of the imagination, nature is a huge plaything, to be tossed about, and forced into whatever shape, and made to symbolize whatever sentiment, the sovereign faculty may impose. The poet, "of imagination all compact," stands before the vast universe of things, and makes it speak the language of his own heart and mind. Every thing stable, and fixed, and hard in matter becomes wax under his touch. All outward objects are colored by the hues of his feelings. He perceives nature rather with the internal than with the external senses. If his soul be darkened by despondency, he can spread a thunder-cloud over the serenest sky; if there be no sunshine in his heart, he can see no sun in the heavens. He sees with his soul rather than with his eye. One of the greatest poets that ever lived—we mean John Bunyan, homely as may be the associations connected with the inspired tinker's name—has left some most pertinent instances in his writings of the sway exercised by the imagination over the external senses. In describing the dark internal conflicts which convulsed him, during one stage of his religious experience, he says:—"I lifted up my head, and methought I saw as if the sun that shineth in the heavens did *grudge* to give me light; as if the very stones in the street, and tiles upon the houses, did band themselves against me." This is as perfect poetry as ever was written.

Thus all poetry must, to a great extent, be transcendental. If in delineating the forms of nature nothing is superadded, the result is always prose. The imagination ever vindicates the natural superiority of mind over matter, by the lordliness

with which it changes the aspects of the material creation. In representing and combining outward objects, it stamps them with a new character. There is hardly a portion of earth which it has not decked with new colors. It has made the world we live in radiant with beauty, by clustering its analogies around all the objects which meet our senses. There is scarcely a form of the visible world which bears not the mark of its celestial footprints. It opens a new revelation of loveliness in every thing it touches. A generation of poets never leave the world as they find it. It becomes a more blessed habitation to the humblest, for every bard who connects any of its forms, colors, and sounds with spiritual truths. Thus poetry ministers to that high aspiration in man for "a more ample greatness and exact goodness, the world being inferior to the soul."

All high imaginative poetry thus transcends the actual sphere of existence. But the poetry of the present age is distinguished by what may be called its philosophical as well as its imaginative character. It grasps at the solution of the dark problems of man's existence and destiny. It grapples with the doubts and fears which perplex the understanding. It watches the movements of the soul, intent on fixing and giving shape to the most fleeting shades of thought and emotion. It is even familiar with the dark and tangled paths of metaphysics. Nothing is too humble for its love, nothing too lofty for its aspirations. The peasant, the monarch, the thinker, are all represented in its creations and ideal forms. Its end is not merely to please, but to inspire and instruct. Whether dealing with skepticism or faith, whether confirming or shaking common belief, it is always in earnest. It is never content with the careless play of fancy, or the cold exercise of reason, on subjects which relate to God, man, and the universe. Its philosophy is not a dead formula, but a living faith, by which the value of institutions is to be tested, and in obedience to which all things must be ruled. It

mingles with all the interests of mankind, and gives voice and form to its rights, its wrongs, and its aspirations. It is, as it were, the champion of humanity, declaring the infinite worth of the individual soul, and, both in anathemas and appeals, striking at all social and political despotisms. The force of its practical teachings, the influence of its lofty declarations of duty and freedom, depend on the fact, that man is a spiritual being, with thoughts and affections transcending the sensible world, and bearing a relation to a future as well as a present life.

Thus poetry, as it makes the material universe more beautiful and sublime by associating its properties with the operations of the mind, has also, especially in the present age, thrown new consecrations around the nature of man, and weakened the force of those slavish bonds of opinion, which bind the victim of the world's tyrannies more strongly than with chains. And this brings us to the consideration of the other grand event of the time, whose effect on the character of its imaginative literature is so great and obvious.

The opinions and contests to which the French Revolution gave rise stirred the mind of all Europe to its depths. This great convulsion left its traces deep in the works of almost every author. All changes in the habits, opinions, manners, government, and religion of society call for and create a new epoch in literature; and the revolution in France was especially calculated to produce that effect. In England, the new opinions and new aspirations, which the great social earthquake excited, affected, in some degree, all departments of letters. It was especially adapted to inflame the passions and stimulate the imagination. There was a general uprooting of every thing on which the moss of time had gathered. "What was gray with age" was to men no longer "godlike." Bold questions were put to all forms of religion, political institutions, and social arrangements. A new train of thoughts, hopes, fears, and sentiments, passed into the

heart and brain of society, and became the inspiration of its literature. Events were constantly occurring, to which no parallel could be found in European history. Fierce and turbulent contests, on the field of battle or in the halls of debate, kept curiosity and wonder constantly awake.

It is evident that such a time as this was not the period for florid imbecilities and harmonious sentimentalities,—for lines addressed to imaginary Chloes and Daphnes, and for the fooleries of courtly affectation. There was a sturdy democracy of readers demanding something more fiery and daring, or something more hearty and true. The naked energy of unchecked passions for once had full play. Great revolutions, threatening the ancient order of things, and promising the reconstruction of the world, opened fresh fields for the imagination. There had been no period in modern history, when those mighty external causes, generally supposed to stimulate the powers of the poet into intensest action, were in such uncontrollable operation as in the interval between the years 1790 and 1820. During that period, but principally in the last ten years of it, the great works of imagination, which are the glory of our time, appeared. In them we discover all the conservative and radical elements, which were rife among the people, sublimed by genius.

It is certain that the moral agencies which the Revolution awoke were among its most marked results. It led to the study and assertion of first principles, and to their promulgation with all the combined energy of reason, imagination, and passion. If the spiritual element, to which we have before alluded, had not pervaded the poetry of the time, it is probable that mere passion would have been predominant, and that the literature would have "foamed itself to air." As it was, almost all the characteristics of the age were reflected in its poetry. The sentiment of humanity, of freedom, of sorrow, of disquietude,—all the virtues, sins, errors, faiths, skepticisms of the time,—its good and its evil, its happiness

and misery, its religion and irreligion,—are seen, in a greater or less degree, in the works of Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, Southey, Coleridge, and many of less note. We also perceive a prevailing earnestness and intensity of feeling, in some cases rising to agony and desperation, in these writings. Most of them display the individual peculiarities of their authors, and are colored by personal feelings. Each opens some new mines of imagination, or penetrates deeper into those but partially explored. The intellectual energy displayed in most of them is in fine contrast with the feebleness and timid elegance of the poets they supplanted. Even those who differ most in the character of their minds and opinions, appear influenced by similar causes. The whole literature, indeed, gives evidence of the mighty commotions of the period in which it was produced, and of the numerous agencies which concurred in its formation. In no other age of the world's history were poets characterized by so much subjective action of the mind, and such marked individuality; yet in no other age did they represent so truly the character and tendencies of common feeling and opinion.

First in point of time, and, in the opinion of many, first in point of genius, among the poets of this period, we must place Wordsworth, the pioneer of the new school, for many years its martyr, and now its patriarch. His life, for the last fifty years, has been spent in thinking, writing, and acting poetry. To him, more than to any other, are we indebted for the return of the divine art to its true domain, —the soul of man and external nature. Born, as he boasts, in a mountainous country, and exposed from his youth to the influences of sublime and ennobling scenery, he early discovered the difference between the poetry of words and the poetry of things. He was fitted by nature and education for the duties and trials of a reformer. More disposed to look within than without for guidance and approval; plain, manly, independent; unconquerable by injustice or even by ridicule;

and free from that servitude to popular caprice which makes the popular author of to-day and the forgotten author of to-morrow; he was eminently calculated to exercise that moral pride which enables a poet to defy contemporary criticism, to retort contemporary scorn, and to labor on a work "in the full assurance that it would be unpopular, and in the full assurance that it would be immortal." His theory of poetic diction, which discarded the peculiar language and jargon of verse, and substituted for it the language of real life, sprang from the simplicity and sincerity of his nature; and if we take his own style as the illustration of the true scope and meaning of his system, we can there discover its strongest defence; for though his diction may lack the incessant glow and glare of Byron's and Shelley's, it is never, in his best works, deficient in splendor and compass. He seems to have begun life with the determination to take nothing at second-hand. It was his object to look nature and man directly in the face, and record his impressions of both without regard to established metrical customs. He was undoubtedly one-sided in the view he took of many of his predecessors; but the evils against which he contended were so great, that nothing but the extreme opposite to the prevailing fashions could correct them. The same enthusiasm and energy of will, which make a man a reformer, make him likewise something of a fanatic.

In his youth, Wordsworth partook of the golden hopes of universal emancipation current among all the imaginative minds of his day; and, with Coleridge and Southey, consumed much time in building Utopian theories of government and "pantisocracies" out of the very inanities of democracy. They had an open sense for all that was poetical in the contests and opinions springing from the French Revolution. Their theories of poetry, though at first somewhat narrow, possessed the advantage of erring in the right direction. They spurned at the old tricks and gauds of

diction, and adopted homeliness in their language as well as in many of their subjects. Nature was the goddess of their adoration. Men and women, as distinguished from lords and ladies, they delighted to honor. They were liberal almost to illiberality. Their adventurous daring consisted in attempting to make those persons and objects which produce physical disgust the means of poetic pleasure. They put souls into dogs, horses, rabbits, and other equally intelligent brutes, and made them the organs of juster sentiments than were uttered in "polite" society. All animals seemed nobler in their eyes than fops and fribbles, though, by a course of very subtile reasoning, fops and fribbles can be demonstrated to be human beings. Indeed, they appeared as the advocates of all things that had fallen under the tyranny of prejudice and harsh opinion. They adopted the quarrel of man and nature against men and society. They were the true democrats of poetry. For the first time, in their writings, the *sans-culotte* trod on poetic feet. All the great virtues and dear immunities of human nature, self-denial, love, charity, faith, piety, goodness, they delighted to represent in the poor and the ignorant,—in those whom poetry before had merely pitied, and whom the dainty spirits of a former age had even stigmatised as "low." They forsook palaces for huts, and were eminently poets of the poor. Neither rags, nor coarseness of manners and clothes, nor even bad taste and worse grammar, could conceal from these literary innovators the inborn grandeur and beauty of the human soul. They committed many errors, and slid into some puerilities; but they deserve the highest praise for passing by the delusions of conventional glitter and pomp, to pour out the full freshness of their young hearts, and the full richness of their fertile imaginations, on objects which pride had before denied to be worthy of poetic adornment; and, by that consecrating power which belongs only to genius, to cast the drapery of the beautiful over what was externally mean and unsightly.

It would be no pleasant task to describe the steps by which these three juvenile republicans became Tories. From their companionship in youth, they were classed together as poets, after a more extensive range over the domain of reason and imagination had separated them in taste and manner. Wordsworth alone seems to have adhered steadily to his poetical principles. In his case, the child was ever "the father of the man." To him, we think, belongs the praise of giving its distinctive spiritual character to the imaginative literature of the age. His position is so prominent among the poets of his time that it cannot be overlooked. Verbal critics may be shocked at some of his phrases, and deny him any merit on account of a few trivial epithets. Worldlings may sneer at the simplicity of some of his delineations of rural life. Truculent poetasters, boiling over with the frenzy of a pot-house inspiration, may charge him with a lack of power. But the fact remains, that few poets of the present age have escaped his influence, and that he has stamped the character of his muse indelibly on their writings. He gave, or largely assisted in giving, that tendency to the poetic mind, which produced, at a later period, the magnificent creations of Byron and Shelley.

The originality of Wordsworth, and the priority of his claims to be considered the leader of the poets of his time, we should be inclined to base on the lines written in 1798, during a visit to the ruins of Tintern Abbey. There is one passage in this poem which is, perhaps, the most remarkable in his writings. After describing the manner in which the forms and colors of nature affected his youth, and the "dizzy raptures and aching joys" to which they ministered, when they were to him "as an appetite, and haunted him like a passion,"—when, in his enjoyment of their beauty and grandeur, they needed no interest "unborrowed of the eye," —he proceeds to indicate the new aspect under which they appear to him, since

"Impulses of deeper birth
Have come to him in solitude,"

and his mind has held mysterious communion with their inward spirit:

"For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh, nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion, and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things."

It certainly was a great advance from Pope for a poet to have "an appetite and a passion" for external nature. But this alone would not have constituted any peculiar claim to originality. In the "sense sublime of something far more deeply interfused," in the feeling, that, behind the forms, hues, and sounds of the material universe, there is something more than meets the external senses,—something which defies analysis, undefined and ineffable, which must be felt and perceived by the soul,—in this intense spiritualism, mingled with the mildest and sweetest humanity, we see the influence, and acknowledge the power, of Wordsworth. No such feeling seems to have stirred the consciousness of Pope, of Gray, of Collins, of Goldsmith, of Burns, or of Cowper; and it is doubtful if it can be found in the great poems of the Elizabethan era. To some, it may appear nothing more than the poetry of pantheism. To some, it may seem utterly unintelligible. It was a greater stumbling-block in the way of

the northern critics of Wordsworth than his alleged vulgarities and trivialities. But nothing is more certain than that it is this spirit which pervades the highest branches of imaginative literature, and is the inspiration of many a passage in Byron which is read with continual delight. It has passed from the summits of poetry to mingle with the interests and contests of society. It is, perhaps, the unconscious inspirer both of much of the radicalism and much of the conservatism of the age. It affects the theological, the metaphysical, and even the physical speculations of the day. In theology, it is the parent of many a hotly contested dispute on "the spirit and the letter" of Christianity. Indeed, the disposition, everywhere observable, to look beneath the forms to the spirit, not only of nature, but of institutions and modes of faith, is the same in substance with that which is expressed in the celebrated lines of Wordsworth. This habit has led to some queer developments, where it has been unsparingly exercised.

In this transcendental region of poetry, Wordsworth is rather a listener than a seer. He hears unearthly tones, rather than sees unearthly shapes. The vagueness and indistinctness of the impression which the most beautiful and sublime passages of his works leave upon the mind is similar to that which is conveyed by the most exquisite music. His is not often the thought

"Which pierces this dim universe like *light*."

His description of indefinite emotions and subtile ideas is so expressed as to be heard by the soul, rather than seen by mental vision. It awakes a certain mysterious and unspeakable delight, which we can refer to none of the common sources of emotion. To one who is insensible to the mystical charm of Wordsworth's writings,—who is incapable of receiving pleasure except from palpable images and turbulent passions,—a great part of the beauty of his finest poetry must

be lost. Few have ever exceeded him in the exquisite delicacy of his sense of sound. Those passages,

"Through which the ear converses with the heart,"

are, in his nature, ever open to external tones and voices. In his own words,

"A spirit aerial
Informs the cell of hearing;'

and this spiritual functionary translates to his soul all the music of the universe into the language of the affections and the imagination. It hears

"Humanity, in groves and fields,
Pipe solitary anguish;"

it enables him to perceive

"The voice of Deity, on height and plain,
Whispering those truths in stillness, which the WORD
To the four quarters of the world proclaims;"

it declares that "innumerable voices" fill the heavens "with everlasting harmony," and that

"The towering headlands, crowned with mist,
Their feet among the billows, know
That Ocean is a mighty harmonist;
Thy pinions, everlasting Air,
Ever waving to and fro,
Are delegates of harmony, and bear
Strains that support the seasons in their round;
Stern Winter loves a dirge-like sound;"

it feels the mysterious power of music, and gives significance to that

"Warbled air,
Whose piercing sweetness can unloose
The chains of frenzy, or entice a smile
Into the ambush of despair;"

it reveres duty as the "stern daughter of the voice of God," and knows

> "A Voice to light gave being;
> To Time, and Man, his earth-born chronicler;
> A Voice shall finish doubt and dim foreseeing,
> And sweep away life's visionary stir."

In that most refined of imaginations,—

> "Beauty, born of murmuring sound,
> Did pass into her face,"—

we are even more impressed with the marvellous delicacy of the "spirit aerial" in detecting the most mysterious and recondite influences of tone.

In this faculty of awaking sentiments of grandeur, sublimity, beauty, affection, devotion, in the mind of the reader, by giving voice and soul to unintelligent, and often to inanimate things, and making them act upon the mind through the subtilest feelings of our nature, it would be difficult to find a parallel to Wordsworth. It is evident, however, that the fineness of his imaginations requires thought and attention in the reader, to be perceived and appreciated. For this reason he has never been widely popular. Few are willing to abstract their minds from the daily routine of life, and bring them into harmony with that of the poet. Wordsworth wrote as if all other men looked upon the universe with his eyes. It has been well remarked, that what he said like a recluse, Lord Byron said like a man of the world. The men of the world called the former a meaningless mystic, and the latter an inspired bard.

Wordsworth did not merely consider poetry as an instrument of pleasure, as a thing which men should write or read in their hours of recreation; but he deemed it an art, to which a long life might be profitably devoted, and that, if need were, it should have its martyrs as well as its disciples. Religion, government, society, science, philosophy, life, he

observed through a poetic medium. The imagination he considered the most divine of our faculties. He gave to its visions the authenticity of revelations. It conducted the soul to heights which yielded

"Far-stretching views into eternity."

God, man, and the universe could be read aright only through the vision of this marvellous power. "It is conscious," he remarks, "of an indestructible dominion;—*the soul may fall away from it*, not being able to endure its grandeur; but if once felt and acknowledged, by no act of any other faculty of the mind can it be relaxed, impaired, or diminished." The understanding ever leads astray when it denies and rejects the imagination. It resolves everything into unconnected parts; it never, unaided, can penetrate to unity. "The pride of intellect and thought" he is continually rebuking, and continually bringing up to its view mysteries which it cannot explain. He says, in reference to some of the "great discoverers" in physical and mental science,

"O, there is laughter at their work in heaven!"

and he exclaims,

"Inquire of ancient wisdom; go, demand
Of mighty Nature, if 'twas ever meant
That we should pry far off, yet be unraised;
That we should pore, and dwindle as we pore,
Viewing all objects unremittingly
In disconnection, dead and spiritless;
And still dividing and dividing still,
Break down all grandeur, still unsatisfied
With the perverse attempt, while littleness
May yet become more little; waging thus
An impious warfare with the very life
Of our own souls. And if, indeed, there be
An all-pervading Spirit, upon whom
Our dark foundations rest, could he design

That this magnificent effect of power,
The earth we tread, the sky that we behold
By day, and all the pomp which night reveals,
That these—and that superior mystery,
Our vital frame, so fearfully devised,
And the dread soul within it—should exist
Only to be examined, pondered, searched,
Probed, vexed, and criticized?"

It has been supposed that the Supreme Being, whom Wordsworth contemplates, is *produced* by the imagination and affections. Some who have objected, on this supposition, to "The Excursion," as a work which accomplishes nothing in divinity and philosophy, have overlooked one important distinction in the poet's notion of imagination. This faculty, with him, not only combines, creates, and produces, but is gifted with insight into the objective realities of the spiritual world. It sees and hears as well as makes. In one of his sonnets, he refers to it as overleaping walls and gulfs of mystery to the Infinite object.

"The universe is infinitely wide,
And conquering reason, if self-glorified,
Can nowhere move uncrossed by some new wall
Or gulf of mystery, which thou alone,
Imaginative Faith! canst overleap
In progress toward the fount of Love."

With this high sense of the uses of the imagination, with this idea of his art as

"The vision and the faculty divine,"

it is not singular that Wordsworth's self-reliance was never shaken by calumny, sarcasm, and neglect. He felt that he had a great purpose to perform in life, and he bent his energies to it unshrinkingly. He lived in times of vast excitement and turmoil, when the fountains of the great deep of

opinion were broken up, and the world was in disorder and commotion, deluged with all varieties of sects and systems. There was an incessant activity of the mind and passions, without any definite resting-place. There was vehemence in asserting and defending opinions, without an assured faith in their truth. The material and spiritual elements at work in society were mutually clashing. He had experienced deeply these outward influences, though the fineness of his affections had preserved him from their harsher manifestations. His writings must be considered with reference to the state of opinion and the outward events of his time. Even when his mind seems most abstracted from real life, and flutters dizzy over the vanishing points of human intelligence, we can perceive that his lofty idealism is assumed for the purpose of opposing some modes of thought, or orthodoxies of action, which he deemed the sins and follies of the period. There is a controversial air around his poetry. The pressure of surrounding circumstances evidently quickened his intellect, not to give an echo, but a warning. He desired to teach a philosophy of the whole nature of man, in which the imagination and the affections should be predominant, and by which the relation of man and the external universe to each other and to God might be displayed "in words that move in metrical array." He hoped to soothe and harmonize the soul by opening it to unexplored regions of loveliness and delight; by accustoming it to the contemplation of the majesty of the universe; by showing the essential littleness implied in the indulgence of stormy individual passions; and by healing those miseries which have their sources in the fret and stir of conventional life. He saw that a vast proportion of the calamities of existence arise from the exaggerated estimate which each individual makes of himself, and the desire of "each to be all." For this individualism he would substitute the sentiment of humanity. No one yields to him in the loftiness of his views respecting the capacity and destiny

of the human soul; yet he is careful to preserve this from the taint of vanity and pride.

Wordsworth professes to find the materials of poetry in the common and familiar things of existence. We think that, in a majority of cases, these common and familiar things are made poetical by his own mind. He superadds more than he evolves from them. He sees objects as they are blended with his own thoughts and imaginations. The common, to him, is full of mystery, and is linked by a chain of mysterious association with the most exalted and kindling truths. Beauty, sublimity, and romance are, to his mind, confined to no period or country, but are ever the attendants of man and nature.

> "Paradise and groves
> Elysian, Fortunate Fields,—like those of old
> Sought in the Atlantic main,—why should they be
> A history only of departed things,
> Or a mere fiction of what never was?
> For the discerning intellect of man,
> When wedded to this goodly universe
> In love and holy passion, shall find these
> A simple produce of the common day.
> I, long before the blissful hour arrives,
> Would chant, in lonely peace, the spousal verse
> Of this great consummation; and by words
> *Which speak of nothing more than what we are,*
> Would I arouse the sensual from their sleep
> Of death, and win the vacant and the vain
> To noble raptures."

In the same spirit he speaks of the beautiful.

> "Beauty—*a living Presence of the earth,*
> Surpassing the most fair ideal forms
> Which craft of delicate spirits hath composed
> From earth's materials—waits upon my steps,
> *Pitches her tents before me as I move,*
> An hourly neighbour."

We perceive throughout Wordsworth a kind of unconscious distinction preserved between man and men. There is no limit to his confidence in the first, but he is inclined to scan the second with distrust and suspicion. In one of Godwin's essays, reference is made to some rascal "who has the audacity to call himself A MAN." In Wordsworth's mind there appears something of this feeling, though in a milder form. The conventional man, whose nature is distorted by the world's vices both in action and speculation, and who is unwedded to the universe in "love and holy passion," is a perversion of man. Hence his strong tendency to consider the elements of human nature, rather than human nature as modified by society. Hence his lack of dramatic power. He is a moral critic of men, rather than a delineator of character. When he takes pedlers and potters for heroes, they are not those of real life, but pedlers and potters after a type in his own imagination. And even then they have little congruity, except that which comes from the consistency of their acts and discourses. Ever aiming at man in the simplicity of his nature, all that can be said of his characters is, that they are not men, but man,—and man after Wordsworth's image.

Much has been written in praise of Wordsworth's philosophy. If we consider philosophy as the product of the understanding,—as an induction from facts carefully collected and rigidly analyzed,—it seems to us that Wordsworth's claim to distinction among metaphysicians must be small. He does not reason up to principles, or down from principles, but he proclaims and asserts principles. A reasoner would not be influenced at all by the theories of God and the universe scattered over his works. In short, he pursues the poetic rather than the philosophic method. His disposition to sneer at exclusive reason, and his deficiency in that dramatic imagination, by which a poet conceives beings differently constituted from himself, and lives for the time with their

thoughts and feelings, would naturally narrow his philosophy of human life to the range of his own experience, and restrict the authority of his metaphysical teachings to those whose minds saw things in the same light in which they were viewed by himself. Shelley says, that a man, "to be greatly good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of another, and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own." Now, the pains and pleasures of the species Wordsworth desires to make his own; but in making them his own, he makes them *Wordsworthian*. The pains and pleasures that the race ought to feel, rather than those which they do feel, are represented in his writings. And it is the same with Shelley.

But the objection which would be made to Wordsworth as a philosopher is the inconsistency of his statements. From the observation of certain mental phenomena, awakened by some mysterious external influences, the Platonic doctrine of preëxistence has been inferred; the contemplations of other philosophers have led them to pantheism; the meditations of others have resulted in the acknowledgment of a Supreme Infinite Being. Now in Wordsworth we perceive each of these systems poetically stated. They have a poetical consistency, as they were the melodious utterances of the bard, when the phenomena from which each is inferred pressed most heavily on his spirit. But it is evident that a philosopher would have attempted to harmonize these by a process of reasoning. He would never have admitted them into his system, without modifying the character of each in such a manner that they would form one consistent theory. But with the poet it is different. He feels more intensely at some periods than he does at others the different states of mind which each system represents, and he pours out the thoughts and impulses of the moment as if they constituted his whole nature. He sees, or thinks he sees, hears, or thinks he hears,

in the visible or in the transcendental world, certain truths; and he gives them shape, sound, or hue, without regard to their limitations in reason.

The intensity with which Wordsworth undoubtedly meditates has probably done much to give him a great reputation as a reasoner; but between reasoning and meditation we conceive there is a marked difference, especially in the action of a poetical mind. We believe that, if "The Excursion" were stripped of its radiant dress of imagination, and reduced to a plain prose treatise on ethics and metaphysics, it would be acknowledged to contain many common and important, and many subtile, truths; but to present, on the whole, quite an unphilosophical blending of assertion and deduction, resulting in inharmonious and contradictory theories.

It is as a poet, therefore, rather than as a philosopher, that Wordsworth is to be considered; for when he deals with the themes of philosophy, he pursues the poetical method. The question, whether this method be the correct one, or whether the things which it proclaims from insight be entitled to rank among facts, we shall not discuss. The confidence which men will place in them will depend on the notions they entertain of the scope of the imagination, and the measure in which they themselves possess it. The pleasure, likewise, which will be experienced from Wordsworth's poetry, will depend on the sympathies which the reader has in common with the poet. To persons either of fiery sensibility or cold understanding it would give but little satisfaction. To one it would appear tame, to the other mystical. Though his writings are not barren of those bursts of fine frenzy, which we all love to consider as characteristic of the bard, his nature is rather contemplative than impulsive. His imagination is most affluent when it is pervaded by a calm, yet intense and lofty, spirit of meditation; and its productions, therefore, do not seem so spontaneous, as if they gushed out in a stream of passionate feeling, under the influence of uncontrollable

excitement. Indeed, in his most elevated flights, his soul seems humbled and awed before the Presence into which it comes, and hesitates to bring the fierce fire of human passions into regions "to which the heaven of heavens is but a veil." He is above the tempests and turbulence of life, and moves in regions where serenity is strength, and where he can perceive the "central peace,"

> "Subsisting at the heart
> Of endless agitation."

The height and intensity of his feeling destroy the appearance of power, even when penetrated by its essence. In reading poetry, we are in danger of being deluded into panegyric by mere sound. Carlyle truly says, that "we do not call that man strong who takes convulsion fits, though in that state ten men cannot hold him." The broad, deep river of song, having its fountain in the human heart, and flowing onward to the one great ocean, may make less noise in its progress than the glittering rivulet, which babbles and chatters the whole of its shallow way. But the rivulet dries up in the sun; the river flows on for ever.

Wordsworth, as a delineator of the heart, is not so successful with the passions as with the affections. He has little of the Titan spirit in his constitution. His passion is "holy passion,"—affection rendered intense by thought and imagination, and denuded of its strictly physical and earthly qualities. To us, there is an indescribable holiness and tenderness in his illustrations of the affections. The occasional puerilities of expression in his early poems are not sufficient to break the charm which they exercise on our minds. We feel, in reading them, the exquisite delicacy of his perception of the heart's immunities. There is no grade of life or being, which does not rise in our estimation and love, after it has been consecrated by his feelings. The beauty, dignity, and worth of human nature are more powerfully impressed upon

our minds, after being taught the greatness and tenderness of which it is capable, in the exercise of its most common attributes. We are made to feel, that the unselfish affections are always to be honored and admired, as much in the humble and uninstructed, as in the noble and most intelligent; that self-devotion is a greater thing than self-aggrandizement, though the former exist in a peasant, and the latter in a prince. Wordsworth's power of abstracting the sentiment from the circumstances which surround it, and making it stand out in the pure light of its own nature, is one prominent cause of the effect it has upon the feelings. A dramatist would include in his representation the whole character of the individual possessing it; and if there were any thing in its accompaniments to awaken other emotions, they would have their due place, so that the result upon the reader would closely resemble that of an incident in real life. We all know that the sight of poverty and distress is not always unaccompanied by ludicrous sensations, and that there is often as much to excite disgust as pity. All persons are not able to survey humility, faith, and self-sacrifice in the poor and unintelligent with the pure feeling of respect. The taste, cultivation, and associations of the observer modify his perception of these qualities in others. But Wordsworth would impress us with so deep a veneration for them, that, when recognized in any form, they should not only be sacred from ridicule, but should make us feel our own littleness in comparison. It is this very absence of dramatic power, this devotion to the thing itself, without regard to our associations growing out of the accidents of its situation, which confers upon Wordsworth's delineations of the affections so much potency. They form an era in the life of every man who reads them. They teach, that man has a property in his affections, which should be as sacred from violation as any which the law protects. Their influence is felt unconsciously by many who have read only to deride. On some men, we

have no doubt, they have wrought a complete revolution in the feelings with which they regarded their fellow-beings. Their extensive circulation would be desired not only by the lovers of beauty and sentiment, but by all who would break down the barriers of selfishness, distrust, and pride, which separate man from man. We believe that they are yet destined to exert, either directly or indirectly, a vast and beneficial influence upon society, by their agency in the imperceptible changes wrought in the manners and feelings of men, through the diffusion of just and beautiful sentiments of benevolence, charity, and love.

The grace, purity, and harmony, which the fineness of Wordsworth's affections often lends to his style and thought, are in the highest degree pleasing. It would be an easy labor to fill many pages in illustration. In "Vaudracour and Julia," we have the following description of love, which, for simplicity and truth, and the fine blending of imagination with feeling, so as to soften passion into beauty without shearing it of its strength, can hardly be excelled.

"Arabian fiction never filled the world
With half the wonders that were wrought for him.
Earth breathed in one great presence of the spring;
Life turned the meanest of her implements,
Before his eyes, to price above all gold;
The house she dwelt in was a sainted shrine;
Her chamber window did surpass in glory
The portals of the dawn; all paradise
Could, by the simple opening of a door,
Let itself in upon him; pathways, walks,
Swarmed with enchantment, till his spirit sank,
Surcharged within him,—overblest to move
Beneath a sun that wakes a weary world
To its dull round of ordinary cares;
A man too happy for mortality!"

The following sonnet appears to us to present a singular

combination of the most powerful and intense meditation with the utmost sweetness of feeling.

"It is a beauteous evening, calm and free;
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the sea:
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear Child! dear Girl! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;
And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not."

The closing stanzas of the poem which succeeds have a witching delicacy and grace of feeling and expression, which alone would enable Wordsworth to find his way into every loving heart.

"A POET'S EPITAPH.

"Art thou a statist, in the van
Of public conflicts trained and bred?
—First learn to love one living man;
Then may'st thou think upon the dead.

A lawyer art thou?—draw not nigh;
Go carry to some fitter place
The keenness of that practised eye,
The hardness of that sallow face.

Art thou a man of purple cheer?
A rosy man, right plump to see?
Approach; yet, Doctor, not too near;
This grave no cushion is for thee.

Or art thou one of gallant pride,
A soldier, and no man of chaff?
Welcome!—but lay thy sword aside,
And lean upon a peasant's staff.

Physician art thou? one, all eyes,
Philosopher? a fingering slave,
One that would peep and botanize
Upon his mother's grave?

Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece,
O, turn aside, and take, I pray,
That he below may rest in peace,
Thy ever dwindling soul away!

A Moralist perchance appears;
Led, Heaven knows how! to this poor sod:
And he has neither eyes nor ears;
Himself his world, and his own God;

One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can cling
Nor form, nor feeling, great or small;
A reasoning, self-sufficient thing,
An intellectual All-in-all!

Shut close the door; press down the latch;
Sleep in thy intellectual crust;
Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch
Near this unprofitable dust.

But who is He, with modest looks,
And clad in homely russet brown?
He murmurs near the running brooks
A music sweeter than their own.

He is retired as noontide dew,
Or fountain in a noon-day grove;
And you must love him, ere to you
He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,
Of hill and valley, he has viewed;
And impulses of deeper birth
Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie
Some random truths he can impart,—
The harvest of a quiet eye
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

But he is weak, both Man and Boy,
Hath been an idler in the land;
Contented if he might enjoy
The things which others understand.

Come hither in thy hour of strength;
Come, weak as is a breaking wave!
Here stretch thy body at full length,
Or build thy house upon this grave."

As far as any of Wordsworth's poems are narratives, they are narratives of thoughts and emotions, rather than actions. Meditation, imagination, and description, generally commingled in their operation, and bearing everywhere the legible impress of his own individuality, appear to be the characteristics of his poems. In the invention of character and incident he is deficient. The skeletons of his narratives present few points of interest and novelty. The filling up constitutes their value. "Peter Bell" is an example, the story being simply this. A vulgar potter, journeying through a wood, spies an ass kneeling beside a stream, and forms the intention of appropriating him to his own use. He mounts him, but the animal refuses to move, and his firmness is not shaken by the most furious blows. It appears that the ass is keeping watch on the spot where his master has fallen into the water, and that he has been there three or four days without food. Peter is affected by what he sees, comes to an understanding with the animal, is conducted to the house of the drowned man, informs his wife and children of the accident, is touched to the heart by their sorrow, muses desperately for some time on his moral condition, and

"After ten months' melancholy,
Becomes a good and honest man."

This is what may be called the story of the poem, and it seems sufficiently puerile. There are many stanzas, likewise,

which are calculated to relax the most rigid muscles of the most rigid Wordsworthian. But the poem, considered as a whole, and viewed in regard to its meditations and descriptions, is grand and beautiful. In the high excellence of some of its details, it would be difficult to find its parallel. The description of Peter's intellectual and corporeal frame, and the external influences to which he was subjected in the formation and redemption of his character, is exact and highly imaginative, both in conception and expression. The manner in which nature and human life are calculated to affect a heart naturally callous, and minister to its worst feelings, is traced with skilful power.

"To all the unshaped, half-human thoughts,
Which solitary Nature feeds
'Mid summer storms or winter's ice,
Had Peter joined whatever vice
The cruel city breeds.
* * * * *
He had a dark and sidelong walk,
And long and slouching was his gait;
Beneath his looks, so bare and bold,
You might perceive his spirit cold
Was playing with some inward bait."

The skeleton of the story hardly rises above that of a nursery tale; the thoughts, emotions, and imaginations which it includes are in the highest spirit of a profound poetical philosophy.

The ridicule which has been heaped upon Wordsworth, for the occasional singularities and tastelessness of his diction, we have no desire to echo. The courage with which he bore both it and the unpopularity which it excited, is one sign, at least, that the faults were not mere affectations. His works were successively received by the dominant critics in Edinburgh with a wild peal of elvish laughter, which rang far and wide over Great Britain; but he still labored patiently on,

with a devout willingness to bide his time. To attack him with the weapon of ridicule was, indeed,

> "Tilting with a straw
> Against a champion cased in adamant,"

In truth, Wordsworth's insensibility to ridicule was, to some extent, the source of many of the faults which provoked it. He seems to have had, comparatively, no appreciation of the ludicrous. He was too grave and earnest himself to calculate the effect of certain phrases and modes of expression upon minds which associated ideas differently. If a subject seemed to him dignified by innate properties, or a word appeared to him picturesque or expressive, he did not inquire how it would be regarded by others. He dwelt too much in his own mind, brooded too intensely over his own consciousness, lived a life too much apart from the flippancies and vivacities of society, to appreciate the condition of minds differently constituted, and subjected to different influences. The insignificant number of his violations of the established decencies of diction is, when we consider this fact, a good proof of his natural taste. The dishonesty of his adversaries consisted in quoting detached fragments of his works as characteristic of the whole, and thus misrepresenting him to the public. Imaginations that "soared into the highest heaven of invention," thoughts of imperishable worth and grandeur, images of almost unspeakable beauty, sentiments of heavenly grace and purity, sweet humanities, calculated to find a home in every earnest heart, were overlooked or scoffed at, except by the pickpockets of letters, because they were sometimes accompanied by errors of taste and diffuseness of expression. Of course, such conduct made his few sympathizing readers champions of his errors of taste, and defenders of his diffuseness of expression.

The character and influence of Wordsworth have rarely been justly estimated. He has been doomed to suffer from

the raptures of his disciples, and from the sarcasms of his adversaries. Men who could see nothing but puerilities in his "divine philosophy," and men who could see nothing but "divine philosophy" in his puerilities, have both contributed to injure his reputation. The injustice he experienced from the sneering critics naturally changed his admirers into partizans. To settle his position in the sliding-scale of English poets was a task of some difficulty; to call him a dreaming old woman, or a heaven-inspired prophet, required but a glib motion of the tongue, or a few dashes of the pen. Consequently he was not judged, but abused and eulogized; ridiculed in newspapers and quoted in sermons; a butt for the reviews and a pet for the parsons. For a number of years, the author of "Peter Bell" and "The Excursion," works replete with elevation of thought and grandeur of imagination, was believed, by many lovers of poetry, to be a queer old gentleman, residing somewhere about the Lakes in Cumberland, and spending his time, like Irving's Dutch burgomaster, in doing a deal of unintelligible thinking, and catching at ideas by the tail; he was accused of laboring under the melancholy delusion that he was the only poet, and of putting forth certain quantities of mystical trash every year to sustain his pretensions; and of reproducing, in the literature of the nineteenth century, those curious legends of John Sprat and Master Horner, which had already been immortalized in the lyrics of an equally gifted old woman.

Lord Byron favored these unfounded prejudices by all the means in his power. It was policy in him to profess ignorance of Spenser, and contempt of Wordsworth. His remark on "The Excursion" is characteristic. "It was clumsy and frowsy, and his aversion." He acknowledged that there was "some talent spilt over it; but it was like rain upon rocks, which falls and stagnates, or rain upon sands, which falls without fertilizing." He knew well how to seize upon those peculiarities of a poet, which he thought calculated to be

popular, and, after disguising them in the splendid apparel of his own diction, and infusing into them the marvellous energy of his own passions, to represent their original proprietor as worthy only of his lordly sarcasm and disdain. His conduct in this respect reminds us of what Dryden says of Ben Jonson's plagiarisms:—"He has done his robberies so openly, that we see he fears not to be taxed by any law. He invades authors like a monarch, and what would be theft in any other poet is only victory in him."

Jeffrey's criticisms on Wordsworth in the Edinburgh Review probably contributed more than any thing else to the comparative neglect with which his poems were treated by the public. These criticisms it is curious to read now, after they have lost all their sting, and are monuments only of the writer's brilliancy and bitterness. It would be wrong to assert, that they do not contain some just remarks; but those who defend them overlook one important fact. Nobody complains that they ridiculed some perversities of the poet's taste, but that they also scoffed at the finest products of his peculiar genius. The "Ode to Duty," and the ode on the "Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood," receive little better treatment than such couplets as this;

> "A household tub, like one of those
> Which women use to wash their clothes."

The *critique* on "The Excursion" is, with all its cleverness, one of the most flippant, shallow, and inconsistent essays ever written. Some of the best passages in the poem,—that, for instance, which describes the sensations of the "growing youth,"

> "When, from the naked top
> Of some bold headland, he beheld the sun
> Rise up, and bathe the world in light,"—

are quoted only to be qualified with the title of "stuff." It

is the incapacity to discern merit, not the exposure of a few errors, which has turned these criticisms from satires on Wordsworth to satires on their author. Jeffrey's subtilty was altogether of the understanding. The most refined processes of feeling and imagination were lost upon him. His talents were never employed to more disadvantage, than when he attempted to criticise Wordsworth and Coleridge. The commiseration he expresses for the perversions of their genius, when he censures those very passages of their poems which are now considered the signs of their genius, appears at the present day more ludicrous than his most felicitous jests.

But a portion of Wordsworth's unpopularity in former years was undoubtedly owing to the faults of his own temper and disposition. That his writings did not sooner begin their ministry of good to the people must be attributed in some degree to himself. He gave his adversaries the advantage over him, by adhering to faults of taste which he knew would be ridiculed. Besides, he had been in his youth a republican. He became afterwards a conservative, and, at times, volunteered his opinions on political matters with no small bitterness of expression. He seemed to rely too much on the "strength of backward-looking thoughts," and to be too deeply impressed with the "care prospective of our wise forefathers," to please an age mad with excitement about the present and the future. His love for England and English institutions was too undiscerning. He celebrated in verse many events which were deemed ominous to the cause of liberty. In truth, when Wordsworth deals with virtue, freedom, justice, and truth in the abstract, or blends them with majestic images drawn from the sublimest aspects of the universe, no poet can be more grand and impressive; but when he connects these with the acts and policy of English Tory politicians, or with the state and church of England, we are conscious that the analogy is false, if not ludicrous.

Many have accordingly classed him with the poets of the past, rather than with the poets of the future, and have denied his claim to rank with those who sing prophecies of a new and better era for humanity. This opinion seems now to prevail, even among those who acknowledge the vast services he has performed to literature, and the importance of the revolution in poetry which he has done so much to achieve.

In our opinion, this is a sophism, arising from a confusion of things essentially different. Wordsworth may be a politician of the past, but he is emphatically a poet of the future. We have already alluded to his lack of practical understanding, and his ignorance of the ways of men. He surveyed things through a poetical medium, and did not, therefore, see them as they were, in the strict meaning of the term. His practical deductions are accordingly incorrect, for his premises are ideal. Lord Bacon's definition of poetry comprehends the whole matter. "Poetry serveth and conferreth to magnanimity, morality, and to delectation. And, therefore, it was ever thought to have some participation of divineness, because it doth raise and erect the mind, by submitting the shows of things to the desires of the mind." Now, Wordsworth, whether he appears to sing of the past or the present, is, in reality, singing of the future. His England of a thousand years past is the Utopia of a thousand years to come. It is false history and true poetry. If he give objective existence to the ideals of his mind in one point of space or time rather than another, the character of the ideal still remains the same. They are ideals which, in fact, have never been realized, and which accordingly relate to some period far in advance of our own. They refer to a state of society, which the lowness of the ideals of many who object to his conservatism incapacitates them from anticipating. If, by some perversity of vision, the poet thinks he sees them partly realized in a corrupt government or in slavish institutions, the blame is to be laid to his eye, and not to his soul.

We will illustrate this by a few extracts. The sixth book of "The Excursion" begins thus:

> "Hail to the crown, by Freedom shaped, to gird
> An English Sovereign's brow! and to the throne
> Whereon he sits! whose deep foundations lie
> *In veneration and the people's love.*"

Now this is false history. It is true of no government in existence. A politician, of either Whig or Tory principles, would despise himself for saying so verdant a thing. It is, in fact, a prophecy of the time when the state will be so pure as to be seated in "veneration and a people's love." The salutation which follows, to the church, is to be interpreted with the same eye to a better condition of the morals and piety of the clergy. That this is the case may be seen from the sonnet to the memory of Milton, in 1802.

> "Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour!
> England hath need of thee; she is a fen
> Of stagnant waters; *altar, sword, and pen,*
> *Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,*
> Have forfeited their ancient English dower
> Of inward happiness."

Here, church, state, and the whole society of England are represented as "a fen of stagnant waters." Now, both representations cannot be true; and yet both were undoubtedly projected from the poet's mind, and are significant, not of the real condition of his country, but of the change in his feelings from despondency to hope. There is no poetical inconsistency between the two. The last represents disgust at the present, arising from a comparison of the present with the ideal; the first represents the ideal projected upon the present. The exaggeration in both cases is the natural result.

To prove that Wordsworth is not a poet of the future, we must prove that he did not advance beyond the present.

Now, it would be difficult to name any contemporary poet whose ideals are higher than his. Lord Byron is generally considered his superior in this respect, because he had a harsh and jarring string in his lyre, and sang of revolution, and hailed the destruction of tyrants by the sword and the axe. In this respect, we humbly think that he was a poet of the past, for nothing can be less original than this mode of disposing of the world's oppressors. The quickest, surest, most natural, and most common method of obtaining rights is to kill him who deprives you of them. This, so far, has been the opinion of the human race, and has been expressed in divers ways at divers times. But one, in whose soul abide the eternal forms of beauty, goodness, truth, and virtue,—whose heart comprehends all mankind in its love, and thirsts for a period when universal benevolence will prevail upon the earth,—who would sing, "long before the blissful hour arrives," the peaceful triumph of good over evil, and right over wrong,—to such a one, the usual mode of despatching oppressors is apt to be distasteful. He may think, that, in the present condition of things, the common course has its advantages; but if he desire to impress on the hearts and imaginations of the people a model of a perfect state of society, he will, if he is a bard of the future, be likely to leave out some of the harsher and imperfect means and materials of the present. This, at least, was the feeling of Wordsworth and Shelley; and this, we humbly conceive, is the Christian feeling.

Wordsworth is considered a champion of monarchy and aristocracy. We do not know but that there may be opinions expressed in his writings which can be forced to bear a construction inimical to political liberty; still, if we consider the tendency of his whole works, we shall find them in the highest degree democratic. "The rights of man" is a phrase to which he gives a more extended application than could be given by any person of less universal sympathies. Mercy

justice, wisdom, piety, love, freedom, in their full beauty and grandeur, are the subjects of his song; and we have yet to learn, that these can subsist with the slightest injury done to a human being. Indeed, he professes to have

> "Sympathies
> Aloft ascending, and descending down,
> Even to inferior kinds;"

and to teach the last hyperbole of toleration, that

> "He who feels contempt
> For any living thing hath faculties
> Which he has never used."

That Wordsworth was unsuccessful in comments on the politics of the hour, and blundered often in applying his ideal standards to the wrong objects, we willingly admit; but we think this is an objection to him as a practical politician and philosopher, and not an objection to him as a poet, "submitting the shows of things to the desires of the mind."

To estimate the degree of longevity which will attach to Wordsworth's poetry might be difficult; but as he has built upon the enduring rock as well as the shifting sand, we cannot tolerate the idea that he will be swept away with things forgotten. As we pause thoughtfully before some of the majestic fabrics of his genius, they seem to wear the look of eternity. And when we consider the vast debt of delight we owe to him, the new inspiration he poured into poetry, and his delivery of it from the bondage of a hundred and fifty years,—the many teasing persecutions he has endured for humanity and literature;—when we think of the consecrations he has shed upon our present existence, and the splendor of the vistas he has opened beyond the grave,—his desire to bring the harsh domain of the actual into closer vicinity to the sunny land of the ideal,—his kindling strains for freedom and right,—his warm sympathy with all that

elevates and ennobles our being, and the sway he has displayed over its holiest and tenderest affections,—and the many images of beauty and grace with which he has brightened our daily life;—when we consider these, his faults and errors seem to dwindle into insignificance; reverence and love leap to our lips, and warm from the heart and brain springs our benison,

> "Blessings be on him, and eternal praise,
> Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares!"

THE POETS OF GERMANY.*

"We see in certain of the best German poets, and those too of our own time, something which associates, remotely or nearly we say not, but which does associate them with the Masters of Art, the Saints of Poetry, long since departed, and as we thought without successors from the earth; but canonized in the hearts of generations, and yet living to all by what they did and were. Glances we do seem to find of that ethereal glory which looks on us in its full brightness from the *Transfiguration* of Raffaelle, from the *Tempest* of Shakspeare; and in broken but purest and still heart-piercing beams, struggling through the gloom of long ages, from the Tragedies of Sophocles, and the weather-worn Sculptures of the Parthenon."—THOMAS CARLYLE.

IN these five large octavos is contained the history of the poetical literature of Germany, from the time of the ancient bards mentioned by Tacitus, down to the death of Goethe. The subject is a great one. It comprises whatever the Muse has sung, during a period of more than a thousand years, in that broad land which lies between the Rhine and the Vistula, the Danube and the Baltic,—the songs of the bards of

* *Geschichte der Poetischen National-Literatur der Deutschen, von* G. G. GERVINUS. Zweite umgearbeitete Ausgabe. Drei Bände. Leipzig: Verlag von Wilhelm Engelmann. 1840-2. (*A History of the (Early) Poetical Literature of the Germans.* By G. G. GERVINUS. Second revised Edition. Three Volumes. 8vo. pp. 1606.)

Neuere Geschichte der Poetischen National-Literatur der Deutschen, von G. G. GERVINUS. Zwei Bände. Leipzig: Verlag von Wilhelm Engelmann. 1840-2. (*A History of the Modern Poetical Literature of the Germans.* By G. G. GERVINUS. Two Volumes. 8vo. pp. 1379.)

heathen antiquity, the Christian poesy of knight, monk, and burgher in the middle ages, and the immortal productions of the great masters of modern verse.

To the accomplishment of his task the author has brought no ordinary qualifications. He exhibits the extensive and profound erudition, the historical faculty of bringing past and remote states of society near, and projecting the present into the distance, and the philosophical insight into the distinguishing features of individuals, communities, and epochs, which so favorably characterize the recent historiography of the Germans. He has evidently studied not only the poetry of Germany, but that of the other contemporary European, not to add Asiatic, nations; and has made himself acquainted with the progress of the kindred arts, and the other departments of letters. No parade, however, is made of his learning; the results of investigation are given, not the processes. Elaborate in its style without being pedantic, rich in significant facts and instructive principles, and free from the details of minute criticism, the work of Gervinus has a higher artistic merit than is usually found in the productions of his countrymen.

We should do our author little honor by instituting a comparison between his labors and those of his predecessors in this department of literary effort. Less brilliant, indeed, than the author of "German Literature," he is, however, less prejudiced and less egotistical; is sounder in principle, more profoundly learned, and more classical in taste. He has written a purely historical, and not, like those who preceded him, an æsthetical work; he has also avoided the common fault of overrating the early poetry of the Germans, in comparison with that of recent times. He has contemplated the progress of poetry from a new point of view, showing what part his countrymen have taken in restoring the pure forms and unconscious spirit of those early days when Homer, Pindar, and Sophocles sang from the pure love of

song, and before the prevalence of philosophy throughout Greece, by developing the reflective powers of the national mind, had infused the sentiments of the schools into the measures of poesy.

In attempting to give our readers some account of this elaborate work, we shall follow quite closely in the track of the author, expressing his opinions rather than our own, and adopting even his language and illustrations when it suits our purpose, though with such modifications that it may not be proper to mark the passage as an extract.

The earliest German ballads have been lost; but there is sufficient reason for believing that the infancy of this, as of every other nation,—including even the degraded tribes of Africa and the rude natives of Kamtschatka,—was delighted and instructed by songs. Tacitus alludes to old ballads, in which the earth-born Tuisco, and Mannus, his son, were celebrated as the founders of the German race; and makes mention of the *barritus*, or discordant chant, accompanied by the clashing together of many bucklers, which inflamed the souls of the warriors on the eve of battle. The bards recorded in song all public transactions, related in succession the names of their kings, and sang the praises of heroes like Hercules and Arminius. The gift of song does not appear, however, to have been confined to any distinct class of persons, but to have been enjoyed by the people at large. If there were wandering minstrels, who gained a livelihood by the use of the lyre, they were probably not numerous, and their vocation was held in but little esteem. Unlike the Grecian, the German warriors all joined in the battle chant and pæan. No priestly order, like the Druids of Gaul, taught in hymns the fables of their mythology; but, as in modern times, the whole people were the guardians of poetry and song, always more universally popular in this than in any other nation of modern Europe.

The poetry of the German bards can bear no comparison

with that of the early Greeks. No song of Sirens was ever heard by the rude voyagers of the Suevian Sea. No Orpheus of the North ever softened the ferocity of Teutonic boars and bears, or drew after him the rocks and trees of the Hercynian forest. Nor could the Germans, situated in a temperate clime, and amid natural scenery of a mild and simple character, have breathed into their early poetry the fiery passions of the Arabians, inhabiting the burning sands of the desert, or the sublime conceptions of the Scandinavians, surrounded by their tempestuous seas, widely-spread snow-plains, and rugged mountains. In this central region, early fable and mythology received more of a historical and humane character; while, during the endless nights of the North, the imagination peopled the darkness with gigantic and superhuman shapes, and beneath the resplendent skies of the South, the fancy revelled in fictions the most fantastic and gorgeous. The life of the German, being one of rapine and war, his songs were imbued with the spirit of revenge and daring, with the love of the ruder virtues, and the veneration of supernatural divinities, with praises of the steed, the bow, the shield, and the spear. War, in fact, was the burden of song in the heroic age, as love afterwards was in that of chivalry.

The regular growth of the early song and tradition of the Germans was checked by their numerous migrations, and their prolonged wars with the Roman Empire. Movements so stupendous must have absorbed all the interests and energies of the barbarian tribes who took part in them. The foundations of society were broken up, whole nations changed their dwelling-places, ancient tribes were dissolved and new ones created; and the languages, laws, and usages of the people were either greatly modified or entirely destroyed. Amid this wild confusion of marching nations, the sweet voices of the ancient bards could no longer be heard. Tribes passed away whose exploits were never chronicled; heroes

lived and died unsung; and the names of few chieftains, except those of Attila and Theodoric, were rescued from unmerited oblivion by the lyre.

With the introduction of Christianity, the heathen bards, who had celebrated the exploits of Hermann and Velida, of Attila and Theodoric, gave place to the ecclesiastical poets, who reduced to verse the legends of the saints and the narratives of the New Testament. They used not the vernacular language of Germany, but the Latin tongue of the more enlightened South; and, instead of the alliteration of the bardic songs, introduced the rhyme of modern poetry. The love of letters was confined to the clerical order, even down to the expiration of the Frankish dynasty; but as the cloister was more serviceable in preserving the treasures of classic learning, and in promoting those abstract studies which requires seclusion from the disturbing influences of society, than in the cultivation of the art of poetry, which is best learned in the midst of men and the stirring events of real life, we find at the present day not so much poetical, as linguistic merit in these effusions of the sacerdotal muse. It should be added, however, that the Æsopic fables of those times, particularly the "Reinhart Fuchs," are not destitute of poetical merit.

The next great event which materially influenced the literature of Germany was the beginning of the Crusades. This great struggle between Mohammedanism and Christianity, together with the extinction of the Celtic nations, and the discovery both of the New World and the passage by the Cape of Good Hope to the East Indies, brought to a close the dominion of barbarian heroism and classic culture over Europe, and ushered in the reign of Christian sentiment and modern ideas. The knowledge of foreign life and literature, introduced among the Germans by intercourse with the inhabitants of distant countries, elevated the character of the clerical order, placed the lyre in the hands of some of the

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most famous heroes of the Crusades at the same time with the sword, and at length wrested from the priesthood the privilege they had enjoyed since the introduction of Christianity, of retaining among themselves exclusively the cultivation of letters. The poetical use of the vernacular tongue, instead of the Latin, was restored; and what was before read from the books of the learned was now heard from the lips of knights and princes.

Christianity, which at a later period exerted a powerful effect in developing the imagination and the understanding of the Germans, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries addressed itself almost exclusively to the cultivation of the feelings, and nourished the most pious and generous sentiments. The steel-clad knight devoted himself to the defence of the faith of Christ, the protection of innocence, the service of woman, the practice of arms, and the cultivation of poesy. He wore the cross as a badge of his faith; and bore the sword not only as a weapon of death, but as the symbol of his honor. Sentiment was the characteristic of the poetry, as of the life, of the Middle Ages. Love was the common theme of the almost innumerable songs of this period. The knights and nobles of Germany were devoted to warlike pursuits, it is true; they tilted for fame in the tournament, and courted death in battle; they lived by the toils of the chase, the spoils of war, and the gains of marauding; and yet, strange to say, scarcely a war-song is to be found in all the productions of the times. The neighing of the war-horse and the blast of the trumpet are not heard in their poetical effusions; but rather the cooing of doves, and the melting strains of enamoured birds. The productions of these Minnesingers *(Love-singers)* are, in truth, somewhat effeminate. Grimm called their art womanish. It did not portray, it must be acknowledged, the great and manly qualities of that stirring age. Entirely subjective in its character, it expressed in gentle words only the tender sentiments. It sung almost

exclusively the delights and pains of love, the bloom of May and the desolateness of winter, the hopes of youth and the miseries of age, the promise of the future and the regrets of the past.

In manliness of character, as well as in originality of genius, the Minnesingers of Germany were decidedly inferior to the Troubadours of Provence. The minstrels of the South sang the honors of war, the duties of knighthood, and the loyalty of vassals, as well as the pleasures of love and the praises of the fair. The verse of Castelnau glows with enthusiasm for his rank and order; that of Boniface with hatred of jurists and prelates; that of Figuera with zeal against Rome and the Pope. Religious opinions, philosophy, romance, every thing, in fact, that was in life, appears in the poetry of the Troubadours. They directed public opinion; and, with true lyric feeling, lived in the present, as the epic poet does in the past. Men held in high esteem both their counsel and their praise; they dreaded the indignation expressed both by their lips and their songs. These minstrels entered the lists of love with princes for rivals, and even assailed the throne with political opposition. The comprehensive culture of the Troubadours gave rise to the greatest diversities of poetic talent, and to very marked differences in the value of their productions; but we can produce numerous specimens from the Minnesingers, which it would require a sharp eye and discriminating study to distinguish from each other. Poets of the former class are rich and varied, while the latter are fervent, in sentiment,—the former being delighted with the mingled play of the emotions, while the others are content with the full utterance of a single feeling. The passion of the Troubadours is stronger and wilder, and has none of that German modesty, which presumes not even to mention the name of its beloved in song. Amid much that is frivolous, what is truly noble in them appears to greater advantage; and when their lays do breathe the spirit

of faithful love, one is more convinced of its genuineness than in the Minnesongs of the North, where vows and oaths are too often repeated with conventional heartlessness. Hence it was, that even Dante and Petrarch did not disdain to refresh their genius at the living fountains of the Valencian minstrelsy.

In the early part of the thirteenth century, while the poetry of chivalry was in its highest estate, was discovered the "Lay of the Nibelungen." This is a collection of old heroic songs, which appear to have been originally composed by different individuals, but were afterwards compiled and wrought together by the skill either of Henry von Ofterdingen, or of some one of the minstrels who embellished with the graces of poetry and music the courts of the Landgraves of Thuringia and Babenberg. The subject of this ancient lay consists of legends respecting the Gothic, Frankish, and Burgundian heroes, who lived in the times of the great Northern migrations; and is treated with that simplicity of manner, purity of sentiment, and magnanimity of thought, which belong to the heroic age of German literature.

At about the same time, also, was brought to light another poem, or collection of poems, called the "Gudrun," which may be said to be the Odyssey, as the "Lay of the Nibelungen" is the Iliad, of Germany. The origin of this venerable relic is enveloped in the obscurity of antiquity, though portions of it may be traced back to the twelfth century. The scene of the sagas of the "Gudrun" is laid in different countries, in Friesland, Denmark, Zeeland, Ireland, and Normandy; and both style and matter occasionally exhibit somewhat of a Scandinavian, Danish, or British, as well as a German character. More highly polished, and more perfect in whatever belongs to poetic form, than the "Lay of the Nibelungen," the "Gudrun" occupies a middle position between popular song, and a more artificial style of poetry. Both poems are an ornament to the literature, and an honor

to the people of Germany. They are alive with the spirit of those old, heroic times, when barbarian bravery, fidelity, and chastity elicited the admiration even of the civilized Romans. Free from modern effeminacy, if not always from primitive coarseness of sentiment, full of healthy vigor and genuine virtue, these lyrical relics are of a far higher order than the contemporary productions of other European countries, and indicate the early existence, in the Germanic race, of those high poetical and moral qualities, afterwards so illustriously displayed in the Lutheran Reformation and in recent poetry.

In the latter part of the thirteenth century, the poetry of chivalry began to be superseded by that of the trades. Cloyed with the sweet excess of love, the Muse forsook the lofty courts and castles of the Minnesingers, to descend into the noisy workshops of mechanics and tradesmen. The tailor broke the monotonous silence of his calling with divine song, and the cobbler relieved his toil with the delights of poesy. The Meistersingers were a fraternity of poetical artizans, who manufactured songs by rule and measure, as well as shoes, coats, and houses. Art was taught by them in formal schools; strict rules of composition were inculcated; and contests of poetic skill instituted, in which the victor was rewarded with a garland of roses. These poets generally drew their themes and inspiration either from the Bible or the contemporary literature; and reflected in their writings the asceticism, scholasticism, mysticism, pedantry, and superstition of the times. Compared with the Minnesongs, the poetry of the Meistersingers is inferior in matter, but more perfect in form. The art of the Meisters is plastic, festive, didactic, and satirical; that of the knights, grave, musical, refined, and either epic or lyrical. The former is the product of the imagination, and aims at entertainment; the latter, of the understanding, and always inculcates a moral. The one is subjective,—rhyming its own fancies, and idealizing the pursuits of mankind; the other realistic,—describing the coarser forms of

human character, and portraying things as they are. That is the poetry of love; this, of life.

The prince of the Meistersingers was Hans Sachs of Nuremberg, shoemaker. Born in the latter part of the fifteenth century, he lived in that ancient city at a period when it was the high school of poetry, and the literary metropolis of Germany,—when it was enriched by trade and manufactures, and adorned by the presence of men of the highest genius, and by all the polite arts which at that time embellished life. This hero of German song, though commonly classed with the Meistersingers, in fact far surpassed them in genius, and brought about as great a reformation in letters as Luther in religion, or Hutten in politics. He greatly improved the poetical forms which were adopted by his predecessors, and, overstepping the limits which had before been drawn around the practice of the divine art, taught his successors to walk abroad over the fields of universal knowledge. The language of Sachs is more highly cultivated than that of any contemporary except Luther. His rhymes are, indeed, frequently turned off with too great rapidity and uniformity; his cultivation was not equal to his native talent; but he had a great poetic soul, and nobly executed the task to which he was called, of singing the praises of virtue and satirizing the follies of superstition. As a polemic, he was moderate; he was warmly interested in the religious reforms of the day, but not excited by them. In other respects, he was one of the most manly spirits who lived in the time of the Reformation,—keeping a soul serene amid all the distractions of the age, and modestly prosecuting his honest trade of shoemaking.

The Reformation gave rise to a new form of religious poetry. The Latin hymns of the Catholic church were supplanted by the sacred songs of Protestant theologians, who, from the time of Luther to that of Klopstock, held exclusive possession of the German Parnassus. The calami-

ties of the Thirty Years' War between the rival churches unsealed the fountains of religious and poetic feeling; and the agitated soul poured itself forth in hymns and spiritual songs. The number of these effusions of the sacred muse was very great; Hardenberg's register contains the first lines of no less than sixty thousand. Almost every priest was, or claimed to be, a poet. The Scriptures and the creeds of the church were versified; the Latin Catholic songs, among which were many of transcendent beauty, as for example, the *Dies iræ*, and the *Apparebit repentina*, were translated; of morning and evening benedictions, of bridal and burial, Christmas and new year's, songs; of house and church melodies, laments, thanksgivings, and litanies, there was almost an infinite variety. Those written by Luther are generally the best. They breathe the spirit of his firm and cheerful faith, of his deep sentiment, and his robust, yet tempered manliness of character. Luther, and most of the other writers, composed musical accompaniments to their hymns; some of them believing, that to every one to whom the Holy Ghost imparted a new song, it also gave a new melody. Whatever Luther wrote was everywhere imitated and sung, in church and school, in the house and the shop, the street, the market-place, and the field; so that the religious songs of the theologians after the Reformation universally prevailed over the secular poetry of their predecessors, as they have also remained unequalled by similar productions of later times. Novalis and Harms may have written choral melodies which embody the spirit of true devotion, and which may be more elegantly finished than those of Hermann or Luther; but the people at large have the stanch faith, the noble simplicity, and the devout reverence of the old times no longer; and, together with the loss of these virtues, they have lost their former enthusiasm for the solemn lyre.

The next great luminary that arose in the poetic heaven of Germany was Martin Opitz. He has been called the

founder of the modern poetical literature of his country; and was, at least, the father of its artistic poetry. Opitz greatly improved his vernacular language, and he united the spirit of the ancient Greek with that of the modern German literature. He first taught his countrymen the art of making literal translations from the classics; he introduced again the secular love-song, that had hardly passed the lips of youth since the days of the Minnesingers; and, developing the powers of the North in Silesia, as those of the more precocious South had before been displayed in Suabia, he established the poetry of reflection by the side of that of sentiment. The great abilities of Opitz were acknowledged even during his lifetime. The contemporary poets were all loud in his praise; the German muse was called the Opitzian; a journey which he made through the land, after the publication of his poems, was a march of triumph; and at Vienna he was both crowned with the laurel, and raised to the honors of nobility. He did not, however, possess the highest gifts of genius; he had no power of original invention, and his poetry was more perfect in form, than fresh and copious in materials. Neither, although there were not wanting good points in his character, was he distinguished by the nobler virtues as a man; but rather, like too many other literary men of his times, by subserviency to the great, who rewarded the poet with offices, and flattered him with titles and honors.

We have now hastily followed our author through the first three volumes of his work, containing the history of the early poetical literature of the Germans; and have reached a period, when we may look for the appearance of a poet of higher and more comprehensive genius than that which animated those whom we have already noticed. Hitherto, we have seen poetry confined to separate classes of society and local schools; we have met with writers whose views were bound to particular times and places, and whose culture was hardly superior to that of the comparatively unenlightened

age in which they lived. But Klopstock, standing on the vantage-ground of modern times, overlooked the entire course of the past. He summed up the labors of all his predecessors, and harvested the combined literary culture of ten centuries. The learning acquired by previous industry, a cultivated language and an improved art, the experience of a long line of poets and ages of history, the liberal spirit of modern times, and the old superstitions, legends, and fair, poetic fables,—all were the inheritance of Klopstock. With this poet, accordingly,—as, in a less degree, with his immediate predecessor, Gottsched,—the universal, revolutionary, and comparatively independent spirit of modern German literature began distinctly to manifest itself.

Frederic Gottlob Klopstock was born in Quedlinburg, in 1724, and lived till 1803. He grew up in the open air, a vigorous and precocious boy; and at an early age learned the arts of riding, swimming, and skating, the latter of which he passionately loved and sang. Solitude and society were equally agreeable to him; hilarity and pensiveness seemed by turns to be the prevailing traits of his disposition. He wrote pastorals and penitential hymns, while at school. Even in youth, says Gervinus, his fingers were skilled to sweep the Grecian lyre, the *telyn* of the old German bards, and the psaltery of the sacred singers of Judea. And he was soon inspired with the ambitious hope of producing some great work, that should enable his native country to take poetic rank by the side of the proudest of her sister kingdoms.

Klopstock excelled in the ode, of which he composed three different kinds; one in the spirit of David and the prophets, another, in that of Ossian and the Edda; and the third, in imitation of Pindar and Horace. Of these different classes, the last is the best, as the Greeks and Romans were the most accomplished masters of this species of composition. According to Herder, every one of Klopstock's

odes has a distinct and peculiar expression; each is a different dance of harmonious words, and each a choral song that must be heard in order to be appreciated. Klopstock was, in fact, a musician. He was an enthusiastic admirer of the great contemporary masters, Handel and Bach, Gluck and Kunst. Their compositions kindled his poetical rapture, and often furnished, directly, the materials for his odes. He has himself acknowledged, that his principal guides, in the invention of lyric measures, were Nature and the tone-inspired Bach.

But Klopstock was not satisfied with writing odes. He burned with the desire to compose a great epic poem, of which the inspiration should be drawn from the religion of Jesus, and not from the art of classic Greece, or the passion of barbarian Germany. He lived, as he once said to his friend Claudius, only to sing the song of God. The execution of this pious work he had designed to defer until he had reached his thirtieth year; but impatient frenzy prevailed, and he commenced "The Messiah" in his youth. The subject of this epic hymn is passion, instead of action; and herein lies its greatest fault. Even the hero is represented as suffering, rather than doing; and all the persons introduced into the poem express their feelings, instead of showing us their acts. These feelings, too, all run into ecstasies; the poem is full of raptures, visions, laments, hallelujahs, and tears. Written under the influence of strong religious emotion, and being, in fact, a record of the poet's spiritual experience, it can be perused only in a similar state of pious exaltation. But as this cannot be a permanent state of mind, the author's attempt at continual pathos and sublimity has necessarily made the entire work a succession of magnificent failures. The men and women of "The Messiah" are either angels or devils; the angels themselves, without characteristic attributes, are vague and empty forms, shadows, nothings. How unlike the fair humanities of

Milton's heaven! In the case of the Saviour, too,—so unlike the beautiful and natural anthropomorphism of the Scriptures,—the majesty of the God entirely overshadows the mild virtues and affectionate sympathies of the man. Thus the beauty of materiality is completely spiritualized away in Klopstock, as facts are all sublimated into sentiments.

"The Messiah" was originally received in Germany with the greatest enthusiasm, and brought many a pious soul to its *Nunc dimittis*. It comprehended all the culture, and surpassed by far the expectations, of the times. But posterity pronounces it, as a work of art, to be too musical in its character, too personal, too pathetical, and too sublime. Men attribute to it, as the noblest poem Germany had then produced, great historical, but less æsthetical value. In fine, they revere the poet, but do not read him.

The religious spirit of Klopstock, who exerted a great influence on the succeeding literature of his country, was reproduced in the early writings of Christopher Martin Wieland. When but thirteen years of age, Wieland began to plan epics; at school, he vexed his nights with pious and penitential tears. When he began to write for the public, his pages glowed with faith in virtue; he admired the simplicity of Xenophon, and studied the wisdom of Socrates with the eyes of Plato, and not, as in later times, with those of Aristippus. He hated the frivolity of the French, and bent with devout veneration over the solemnities of Young. He composed an *Anti-Ovid*, and the *Emotions of a Christian*, in which piety was surrounded with those graces that he afterwards caused to wait on pleasure. He celebrated in pastorals the innocence of an idyllic life, believed in the past existence of an age of gold, when purity was protected by fig-leaves, condemned the Anacreontic poets who sung the charms of Venus, and anathematized the poetry of the imitators of Ovid as the wine of devils, by which thoughtless souls were intoxicated to their own destruction.

The piety of Wieland passed away with his youth; and the author of "Agathon" fell for ever from the heaven of the seraphic poets. This work, as well as several others on Grecian themes, was written in the spirit of the Aristippian philosophy. The perfumed air of the isles of Greece blows over their pages. Still, as there was nothing wanting, save the electric spark of genius, to reduce to fusion the poetical materials in Wieland's mind, in order to make him a true poet; so was there nothing lacking in his delineations of Grecian life and manners, to render them truly antique, except the old Greek feeling itself. His Graces are not the same beauteous virgins that waited on the footsteps of Aphrodite, and danced in the presence of Jove. They are affected, instead of being ingenuous; and have modern coquetry, in the place of antique innocence.

In his attempt to reproduce the spirit of the Middle Ages, Wieland was more successful, as the task was much more congenial to his temperament. "Gandelin," and his other tales and fables in imitation of the literature of chivalry, possess all the graces of fancy and sentiment which embellish the writings of the Minnesingers. They transport us back to the romantic times, when the squire was proud to follow his knight, when the peasant fought unto death beneath the banner of his chieftain, and the chieftain beneath the eye of his prince. "Oberon," founded on the old romance of Huon de Bordeaux, is, in fact, almost the only work which made, and still preserves, the name of Wieland popular. It does not, however, rank with the highest kind of poetry. Its object is merely the entertainment of the reader; and success in this species of composition requires no higher gifts than those of poetic recital.

Wieland received from Aristippus the principle, that wisdom consists in holding the golden mean between all extremes; but unfortunately, he did not always follow it in practice. The society in which he lived was in a state of

transition, like that through which the individual sometimes passes from childhood to manhood,—a state of doubt, self-deception, and frequent change. He occupied a position midway between the pastoral innocence and golden youth of Klopstock's time, and that of the enlightened, philosophic culture of Schiller and Goethe. We find him, at one time, writing out his religious experience, and, at another, studying French poetry and composing in the style of Voltaire; now attempting to revive the romantic spirit of the Middle Ages, and now to reanimate the antique genius of classic Greece; now designing to portray in a romance the school of Socrates, and then to write a history of the German Empire. Sometimes, he allowed himself to sport with the most sacred mysteries of religion, and then again he endeavoured to lay the foundations of a purer and higher morality, by teaching the inseparableness of wisdom and virtue. He held, that the object of poetry and art was to produce the beautiful, not the useful, or the pleasurable; and yet was ever employing them to invest virtue with graceful attractions, and to enrich life with elevated pleasures. He led a high ideal life, while he was at the same time polluting his pages with wanton descriptions of vice. Living in the bosom of his family, on a dozen acres, he was also a citizen of the world; was both poet and critic; a novelist to-day, and a philosopher to-morrow. Such a career precluded him, of course, from effecting much in the higher walks of art, and prevented his exerting any thing more than a transient influence upon the character of his countrymen.

We now come to a writer in whom is to be found nothing either of the maiden sentimentality of Klopstock, or the refined, philosophic effeminacy of Wieland. Lessing was not a man to waste his nights in pietistic weeping, nor to lie down beneath Elysian skies to indulge in day-dreams of love and pleasure. His was a proud and daring spirit, endowed with fortitude, magnanimity, and great decision. The son of an

orthodox clergyman, Lessing was designed by his parents to follow the profession of divinity. But his free and wild spirit made him prefer the stage to the pulpit, and set the society of wits and players before that of pedants and theologians. At the youthful age when Klopstock read Fenelon, and Wieland was absorbed with Xenophon, the favorites of Lessing were Terence, Plautus, and Theophrastus. Impatient of the restraints of university life, believing that books would never make him wiser, and involved, moreover, in pecuniary difficulties, from his thoughtless but generous prodigality, and from the expense of learning the arts of riding, fencing, and dancing, he left his debts behind him in Leipsic, and his studies afterwards in Wittenberg, to take refuge in the society of the freethinkers of Berlin. There, having relinquished all thought of seeking his fortune either by medicine or theology, he gave vent to his struggling feelings in epigrams, and wrote the learned articles for the newspaper of Vosz. Fettered to no place and to no persons, he soon left Berlin to accompany the army to Breslau, in the capacity of secretary to Tauenzien. A professorship in Königsberg, which was some time afterwards proffered him, he declined, from unwillingness to pronounce the yearly panegyric; and indulged his imagination with the prospect of a more independent mode of life, by connecting himself with a bookseller's house in Hamburg. But he finally accepted the office of librarian at Wolfenbüttel, where he could gratify his desire to labor and put forth the force that was in him, without being a dependent on the sweet voices of the public, or a hanger-on upon any man's favor. There he generously furthered all noble undertakings within the sphere of his influence, and continued those labors for elevating the low estate of the German theatre, which long afterwards resulted so gloriously in the perfection of the national drama. At this period, a great calamity befell him in the loss of his wife and child; but he bore it with noble stoicism, though saying,

that these frequent messengers of death made him anxious to follow their call.

The same spirit which characterized the life of Lessing pervaded his writings. While Klopstock described the heroic, and Wieland the weak, the works of Lessing exhibit the natural and true man. They are filled with a spiritual freshness and healthy vigor, such as can be found in those of no other modern writer in Germany. There is no false sentiment in them, no corrupt principle. Lessing is earnest, vigorous, tolerant, truthful, progressive. He turned away from Wieland's "Agathon" with moral indignation, though highly appreciating its artistic merit; and said pedantically of Goethe's "Werter," that such an ἐξ ἔρωτος κατοχή, impelling a man τὶ τολμᾷν παρὰ φύσιν, would not, in the age of Socrates, have been deemed allowable even in a girl. Though a thorough German, he had more of the spirit of the old Greeks, and a clearer insight into the character of Grecian art, literature, and life, than any of his countrymen who lived before him. For nature, he possessed a simple, unsophisticated love, but not a sickly longing, such as is sometimes found in persons who are less familiar with it. In poetry, he sought for man and manly actions, not for moral precepts, or descriptive landscapes. In philosophy he believed in the ἕν καὶ πᾶν of Spinoza; but also in a Providence which notices the fall of the sparrow, and in all the orderings of which he manifested a truly Greek, we can hardly say Christian, acquiescence. He acknowledged no other moral law for a moral being than that which is derived from his particular nature, and which requires him to act according to his individual endowments. Truly antique was his sentiment, that one ought to be so occupied with the duties of the present life, as to have no inclination to debate the existence of another; and that, as we can await the end of a single day, so ought we to be able to await that of life; and any astrological art or religion, which could disclose to us either

the near or the distant future, would not be worth the having. In the same spirit of resignation to a higher Power, he once told Jacobi, though his entire life was a rare specimen of the noblest liberty, that he wished for no freedom of will. His love of truth was surpassed by nothing but his love of the pursuit of it; and he has left on record the following sublime passage, as remarkable for its modesty as its boldness:—"It is not the truth a man has, or thinks that he has, but the sincere pains he has applied to obtain it, that constitutes his worth. For not by the possession of truth, but by the search after it, are his powers enlarged, wherein alone his ever growing perfection doth subsist. Possession makes man quiet, indolent, and proud. If God should hold out in his right hand all truth, and in his left simply the intense desire for it, although with the condition that I should eternally err in the pursuit, and should say unto me, Choose! I would fall humbly on his left, and say, Father, give! Pure truth is, indeed, for thee alone." The religious sentiments of Lessing were similar to those which have since prevailed in the learned classes of German society; yet, like Leibnitz before him, allowing both an esoteric and an exoteric faith, he was very far from wishing to alter the forms of the established worship, or in any way needlessly to disturb the faith of the common people. The labors of Lessing were very various; his learning prodigious; his aims universal; his influence extensive, and, in certain respects, salutary. Like Leibnitz, again, he ranged observingly over the whole theatre of the period in which he lived, proving all things and holding fast to that which was good; narrowed by no exclusive system of philosophy, and devoted to no one method of investigation. He at last brought the ancient times to a complete termination, and fully introduced the new ages.

Lessing was no poet. He himself expressly said, that the living fountains of poetry were not in him. But the author of the "Laocöon" was perhaps the greatest critic of modern

times. The object of this celebrated work is to show that the isolation of the several fine arts from each other is essential to their perfection, and that their common aim is the production of beauty. The peculiar province of poetry is proved to be entirely distinct both from that of morality and of philosophy, being limited, strictly speaking, to the exhibition of ideal actions. These views, in which Lessing differed widely from Klopstock, who made moral beauty, and also from Wieland, who considered nature and truth, as the great aim of poetry, but in which he agreed with Aristotle, and was closely followed in their æsthetical theories by Goethe, Schiller, and Humboldt, were enforced with great argumentative power, extraordinary purity and correctness of taste, and with rich and pertinent illustrations from the art and literature of Greece. By his plays, written in prose, and which, marking out the boundaries between prose and poetry, first established the true relations between them, Lessing regenerated the German stage; and by his "Dramaturgie" delivering German poetry from the yoke of French dogmatism, he pointed out to his countrymen the true paths to the Parnassian mount, which they afterwards so generally and successfully followed.

We cannot pass by Winckelmann, that noble Grecian, who, in the middle of the eighteenth century, was the teacher of art for all civilized Europe, without saying a word or two respecting his character and works. Reluctant, like Lessing, to study the profession of divinity, for which he had been set apart, this great expounder of antique art sighed out the first thirty years of his life in giving lessons to little boys and girls. His spirit remained unbroken, however, and the study of classic art and literature afterwards restored him to second youth. At length, for the sake of spending the remainder of his days amidst the ruins and the arts of Rome, he changed his religion, and adopted the name of Catholic,—saying to a friend, "*Nullum ingenium magnum sine mixturâ dementiæ.*"

In fact, however, though the recollection of early religious impressions was always precious to Winckelmann, as to Goethe, though he also composed Lutheran hymns that were pressed, throughout Prussia, to the hearts of the pious, and though, when under adversity, he could pour, both into his own bosom and the broken hearts of his friends, the oil of religious consolation, yet he laid no claim to piety in the popular sense of the word. As he was a Catholic at Rome, so would he, in Greece, have been a priest of Cybele, or a worshipper of Osiris in Egypt. His religion, which he called philosophy, was that which, in his opinion, remained at last as the common truth of all forms of religious belief. To act and strive in the present hour he considered to be his calling; and thought, if possible, less even than Lessing of immortality. In Winckelmann, the good and the bad were mixed up together, as in nature; and to be better than nature, he, like Goethe, had no desire, but rather a disinclination. In the solitude and adversity of his early life he acquired an elasticity of mind, which enabled him to make sacrifices and practise self-denial, but which also fitted him for yielding easily to the pressure of circumstances and the wickedness of mankind. He was too proud, it must be confessed, of his name and reputation; and the intensity with which he loved his country was regulated by the amount of incense it offered to his vanity. His simplicity and *naïveté* of character were extraordinary. He laid open his whole nature to inspection; and followed out, like a child, all his impulses, though with a certain degree of moderation,—saying, with the wise men of antiquity, that he wished not to be too happy. In Italy, he learned to harmonize the conflicting elements of his character, —husbanding his enthusiasm, guiding his straight-forwardness with prudence, and mitigating the violence of his passions by quiet and humility. The great work by which Winckelmann is known to fame is his "History of Art." By this, he opened the realms of beauty to his countrymen, and led

them into the temple of Grecian art, as Herder did into that of Hebrew wisdom and poetry.

The first appearance of Herder in literature was bold and even arrogant. The sensitive, excitable youth, whose nerves were too weak for the practice of medicine, for which he had been designed, and whose retiring and conscientious disposition better fitted him for the profession of theology, which he afterwards followed, came forward at first, anonymously, indeed, but in a style of composition that was fearless, assuming, and ambitious. Though a teacher in his youth, like Winckelmann, he never had, like him, to struggle with poverty; he started, also, with this other advantage over his immediate predecessors, that he entered into the harvest of their labors. Favored by fortune, though never aided by friendship, for which his shrinking and distrustful disposition made him quite unfit, his gentle, pliable nature acquired elasticity and hardihood. In his early publications, which consisted chiefly of critical essays upon literature and art, he boldly attacked, though he by no means overthrew, the artistic theories of Lessing and the philosophical system of Kant. He advocated his own opinions with strong and genial enthusiasm, and displayed, withal, a liberality of religious sentiment, that did not fail to raise some suspicions of his orthodoxy in the minds of more scrupulous theologians. He adopted, in the main, the theological views of Lessing, carrying them, at least, as far as was consistent with his sacred calling, and defending them, together with the philosophy of Spinoza, against the objections of Jacobi.

Of all Herder's predecessors and contemporaries, Lessing exerted the greatest influence upon his writings, though Klopstock produced a deeper impression upon his character. Compared with the former, Herder has more feeling, Lessing more insight. The writings of Lessing abound in convincing demonstrations; those of Herder, in splendid declamations; the one having more science and more truth, the other more

rhetoric and more error. The former always exhausted his subject, and brought his works to completion; while the latter never published any thing but fragments. But in susceptibility to the beautiful and noble in the literature of foreign countries and distant times, Herder excelled both Lessing and all his other contemporaries. Such was the facility with which he seized upon the characteristics, and such the fidelity with which he reproduced the spirit and form, the tone and coloring, of the literature of all nations, that the haughtiness of the Spaniard, the *naïveté* of the Lithuanian, the mild sentimentality of the German, the dashing boldness of English historical romance, the fresh life of the ancient Greek, and the dreamy musings of the Asiatic Indian, the glow of the South, and the gloom of the North,—all seem to be comprehended within the broad bosom of this one genius. As Winckelmann's "History of Art" unlocked the treasures of Greece, so did Herder's "Spirit of Hebrew Poetry" open the way to the ancient world of the East, whence, as also from all European lands, from the vales of the tropics, and the hills of the North, from Greenland and Peru, he brought home flowers of every form, hue, and scent, to interweave in the garland of his country's literature.

Herder was like an inspired child,—all sense and feeling, in love with simplicity and nature, and deeply impressed by the mysterious or remote in time or place. His whole life, he once said, was but the interpretation of the oracles of his childhood. Children, women, and men of simple minds were, in his estimation, the most eloquent of orators. He wished he had been born in the Middle Ages; he gave an ear to prophesyings, and longed to see a ghost. The earliest poetry he always thought the best; and language in its rudest state, the most poetic. He regarded Greek poetry as not to be compared with the Hebrew; admired Ossian and the songs of the North American Indians; and looked upon his treatise on the earliest records of the human race as a

new Scripture. He made collections of popular songs, and set a higher value on them than upon the productions of artistic poets, not one of whom could he endure, save Klopstock. His imagination roamed enraptured through the paradise of the past, and beheld in the distant future a return of the age of gold.

The views and principles advanced by Herder in the second stage of his progress were very dissimilar to those entertained by him in the first. As was the case with Goethe, the revolutionary spirit, with which he was possessed in youth, died out in him long before it did in the nation. Hence, in his "Calligone," and his polemical writings against Kant, we find him both contradicting his former self, and opposing the spirit of the times. In early life, he thought that poetry declined with the progress of civilization; but now he believes in its advance. No longer the idolizer of popular song, he considers that the highest poetry in which there is a harmonious union of nature and art. He expects the coming of a future bard, who shall sing in measures the last results of philosophy, and even reduce to verse the scientific systems of Copernicus and Buffon. As Goethe, at a later period, discovered something excellent and weighty in the decency of Voltaire, so Herder, the former admirer of the simplicity of nature, now appears as the defender of the French poets, and praises the precision and definiteness of their language as the necessary fruit of refined culture. He, who once complained of the mingling of the beautiful and the good in the works of Klopstock, now adopts for his motto,—the beautiful, the good, and the true, one and inseparable. No longer do we hear him declaim about the unconsciousness of genius,—he does not believe in it; no longer does he proclaim the inspiration of feeling,—he laughs at the Quakers in science, who wait for the anointing of the Spirit; no longer does he extol the genius of Shakspeare,—he is almost in favor of shutting up the theatres; no longer

is he the advocate even of the freedom of religious opinion, —he proposes to forbid theological polemics by a royal ordinance, and to expurgate error by fire from every circulating library in the land. Herder went back to the seventeenth century,—the age which, like himself, studied antiquity and translated foreign literature, which mixed up the styles of poetry and prose, which divided its interest between poetry and theology, —the age of enthusiasm[1] for popular songs and music, and the age, also, of historical learning, culminating in Leibnitz, who, in this respect, was Herder's highest ideal.

Herder was not without a certain *penchant* for practical life. He wished that he had received an education which would have better fitted him for living in the midst of men; that he had devoted himself to the study of mathematics, history, oratory, drawing, nature, mankind, and manners. He proposed to reform the schools by the introduction of realistic studies; he taught that all methods for reforming mankind, except the cultivation of the more active virtues, served only to enervate them; regretted that he had become an author; and lamented the want of those popular accomplishments, which were necessary to make him the centre of extensive social influences. Herder was ambitious to play the same part at the court of Catharine which Voltaire did at that of Frederic; and, after founding an academy, according to the pattern of his ideal, in Finland, he proposed to apply the principles of Montesquieu to the national education of the natives. The opportunities which he actually had, however, for displaying his skill in the marshalling of affairs, did not turn out very successfully. Being invited by Count William as court preacher to Bückeburg, he accomplished nothing for the benefit of prince or people, beyond making religion agreeable to the Countess, who was sickly, and concerned about her future state; and at the court of Weimar, also, whither he was called through the influence of

Goethe, he confined himself altogether to comforting the Duchess.

We next turn, for a while, to Jean Paul Frederic Richter, of Wunsiedel, who was born in 1763, and died in 1825. He is one of those authors who have the misfortune to be extravagantly admired by one party in literature, and as decidedly disliked by another. Many persons, after having reached the age when they require their understanding to render an account of their reading, soon become weary of his writings. To others, on the contrary, Richter appeared not a whit less than an apostle; and sentimental ladies were so smitten with adoration of his genius, as to think themselves honored by wearing a lock, not of the poet's hair, but of his spaniel's, in their bosom. The judgment which Gervinus passes upon this writer may not satisfy many of his admirers either in Germany or in this country; but it will not appear too severe to the great majority of his countrymen, who do not rank him among their highest poets.

Jean Paul's nature, unlike that of Schiller and Goethe, for example, had but one period of development, and then stood still. Though not altogether unconscious of the imperfection of his spiritual growth, he could never fully understand the saying of Goethe, that one is a different person every ten years. He himself enjoyed throughout life perpetual youth; and hoped for nothing better than its perpetuation even in heaven. The heats of youthful passion and the fire of early enthusiasm never abated in him. His *morale* inculcates the purity and innocence of childhood; and his views generally are so characterized by youthfulness, as to appear rather unsuitable for his manhood and his years. His life, too, was one of great uniformity. Little influenced by public events, and little varied by fluctuations of domestic fortune, it was not much more than a peaceful succession of states purely idyllic. His autobiography is a perfect picture of still life, not differing widely from many of his romances; and was

not completed, partly, perhaps, because there were no more facts to be narrated. He grew up in narrow circumstances, with little help from the schools, but indifferently well versed in history and the common branches of learning, with only a smattering of ancient literature, and a superficial, though extensive acquaintance with the sciences.

If, however, there was no after-growth in Jean Paul's nature, the first growth was a very rich one. If his actual life was monotonous, that of his imagination was crowded with events the most remarkable, and scenes the most varied and interesting. He derived not much benefit from the teachings of the schools; but his twelve quarto volumes of extracts, completed before his entrance into the university, certainly exhibit the diligence and perseverance of the self-educated scholar. Composition was almost a monomania with Jean Paul. He began to write books as soon as he had learned to form his letters,—kept diaries, both religious and secular,—even noted down subjects for conversation on a tablet,—had at one time collected together no less than twenty thick quartos of ironical expressions, and a still larger number of satirical ones,—become an author before he was out of his teens,—and, instead of devoting his youth to the collection of materials for future use, reaped the fruits of his learning while they were yet green and half grown. He drank wine to enliven his wits at the writing-desk, instead of satisfying the demands of appetite with it at the table; and thought, at the end of each day's labors, that he was nearer to an easy death, in proportion as he had diminished, by writing, the wearisome burden of thoughts that weighed upon his brain. His youth was poor indeed in worldly goods; but in feelings, fancies, and domestic joys, it was very rich. With the help of a little music and moonshine, a few holyday visits to town, and the pursuit of a village maiden indifferently pretty, he enjoyed an income of spiritual delights, not to be exchanged for the gold of *millionaires* or the jewels of

princes. Nearly all the characteristic elements of the times are to be found united in his writings,—the heartlessness of its satire, its sickly excess of sentiment, the "chamois leaps" of its wild, irregular fantasy, the sober views of its sound understanding, both its love and hatred of the world, its idealism, its realism, and its spirituality. At the same time, his productions are all strict transcripts of his inward life. He is constantly drawing away the attention of the reader from the work to its author. We recognize his own peculiarities in Fixlein, his own home attachments in Wuz and Fibel, the petty foibles of his first authorship in the "Wild Oats," and the portraits of his personal friends in the heroes of the "Titan." The pages of Jean Paul sparkle with the most brilliant coruscations of wit and fancy; yet his humorous, like his heroic characters, are too often mere caricatures. On the whole, it must be said, that his works abound more in reflections than in facts, in sentiments than in truths, and less in the description of actions, than in visions, dreams, allegories, and whatever else there may be that is fantastic and unreal.

"These," says Gervinus, "are the two extremes on which every thing turns in this writer. On the one side, he is offended with the world, he turns away from men with contempt, and annihilates the external universe with scorn; on the other side, he attaches himself to still life, retires into the realms of the spirit, and finds again his lost worldly weal in the quiet of narrow circumstances, and in silent communion with his hopes of a better future. To the first mood of mind, we are indebted for his humorous characters, who carry their raillery against the world to a disgust with it; to the second, for his soft, self-conceited personages, who unite an utter ignorance of men with an infinite love for the welfare of the entire race. The one class of persons sink, on occasions, to the most contemptible meanness; while the 'flower-souls' of the second class exalt themselves to the extreme of the author's so-called noble characters, who turn their backs on the world to preserve themselves from its pollution, and discover that the highest purity of soul is inconsistent with habits of active usefulness. On the one hand, Jean Paul is skeptical, satirical, a persecutor of German coxcombry, and a realist in his manner of representation, as is

generally the case with youth when it falls into this extreme; on the other hand, he is sentimental, weak, inflated, elegiac, and a spiritualist, such as is rarely to be met with. If in the first direction he heaps up wit beyond measure, and overtasks the powers of the understanding; so, in the second, he goes too far in the excitement of sensibility, and in his tendency to tears, to which, like Sterne, he is very fond of moving his readers."

The most important fruits of Jean Paul's genius are the "Titan," and the "Wild Oats," *(Flegeljahre.)* The former of these seems to have been intended for a side picture to Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister;" and, though to a great extent a reproduction of the "Hesperus,"—as many of Richter's later productions are mere repetitions of their predecessors,—is generally considered as the author's masterpiece. In the latter, we are presented with a picture of the chivalry of early feeling, of the mad fancies which are wont to chase each other through the brains of youth, of winter plays around the paternal hearth, of quiet domestic joys, of first love, of Sunday home-sickness, and of every thing, in fact, which thrills the young and generous bosom, such as can be found on the pages of no other writer. The religious views of Richter may be best learned from his treatise on immortality, entitled the "Campanian Vale," *(Campanerthal,)* in which, adopting the doctrine of the Critical Philosophy, he predicated the existence of a future life on the consideration, that another and a higher state of being is necessary for the perfect development of the good, the true, and the beautiful. His religion consisted in living for immortality and the Divinity. He always despised earthly fame, as men of the highest genius are not wont to do; and in his youth, wished to learn nothing but what would be useful to him in the life to come. He stood with but one foot on the present stage of existence, ever ready, pen, ink, and paper in hand, to step off with the other upon the future.

Passing from the modern Gothic style of Richter, we find at last the restoration of ancient classic beauty in the works of Schiller and Goethe. To these two poets our author has

devoted upwards of two hundred pages; but the narrow limits within which we are restricted, and the length of time we have already trespassed upon the patience of our readers, will not allow us to do more than cast a hasty glance upon their characters and writings.

If we were to attempt to characterize Goethe with a single word, we should say that he was an *optimist*. He beheld imperfections both in nature and humanity, but also a great tendency to amelioration,—a great, universal law of progress, slowly and silently, yet everywhere and irresistibly, evolving good out of evil. This progression, moreover, he was not at all anxious to accelerate beyond its natural pace, by any forced activity of his own. He put no spurs in the sides of his intent; but allowing free play and scope to the forces with which he had been endowed, ever kept his mind in a state of healthy and genial action. He constantly defended himself against all external influences that might disturb the serene equanimity of his feelings, or that might stimulate the warm glow of thought into feverish excitement. The discord of human opinions appeared to him to grow entirely out of the diversity of human character,—all systems of faith or philosophy, however contradictory in appearance, to be founded on essentially the same great, universal principles,—and every error, so called, to be only a different phase of truth, which, under an infinite variety of forms, is one and the same for ever. He was, accordingly, tolerant of the views of those who disagreed with him; and did not think it essential either to the present or future salvation of others, that they should be converted to precisely his way of thinking. He was content to study Nature as she is, and asked not of her the questions,—Whence, or Whither. Little interested, in fact, in the history of the past, and wholly disinclined to any speculations respecting the future, he lived cheerfully and actively in the everlasting present. Having a character built up, as the Germans say, on every side, he was a good hater of

systems of philosophy, as narrow and one-sided; and, experiencing in himself as many as three or four entirely new evolutions of nature, he abjured all creeds and formulas of belief, as hindering the mind from progress.

One of the great principles which guided the life of Goethe may be found in the sentiment expressed by Cicero, in his beautiful tract *De Senectute*,—"*In hoc sumus sapientes, quod naturam optimam ducem, tamquam deum, sequimur, eique paremus.*" Of a delicate organization, the communion of nature was more agreeable to Goethe than the society of men. He guarded his individuality of character from the too near approaches even of friendship and love; but nestled confidingly as a child in the kindly bosom of mother earth, and received the breath of his life from the inspiration of this great mother. In this great genius, as in the material world, the most mighty and discordant forces were blended together in peaceful harmony; and the expression which characterizes both his life and works is kind and calm, like that which rests upon the face of nature. The perfect man, he taught, is one whose faculties, of what kind soever, are all fully and naturally developed, the lower being in willing subjection to the higher. Pantheistic in his religious belief, he held to no self-determining principle in the individual soul, and considered the freedom of the mind to consist in nothing more than the harmony of its faculties. His motto was, *Vivere memento.*

Goethe was an artist,—nothing more, nor less. Schiller wrote history, and dabbled in metaphysics, though he had no talent for pure speculation, and his history is but little better than fiction; but Goethe never left the mountain of the Muses. He was a naturalist, it is true, yet his observations of nature were all made on the Parnassian heights, and along the banks of the Castalian waters. He viewed life poetically only, and converted all things to artistic uses. When in Italy, he set a higher value even on the shadows of ancient art, than upon the human beings who were wont to repose

under them; and could conceive of no two things more undesirable, than to rebuild the picturesque desolations of the Eternal City, and to cultivate again the sublime wastes of the surrounding *campagna*. So exclusively was his life consecrated to the service of Apollo, that he turned away from the study of the facts of history, avoided all philosophical investigations, and abjured the habits of reflection and self-examination, in order the better to preserve unimpaired his power of poetical creation. His whole experience was written out in poetry, or in fiction. Whatever there is gay or sad in his writings was first in his life; and it is to the short but severe struggles of the world within and without him, that we owe all the early, and some of the most important, productions of his muse.

The author of "Faust" was lavishly endowed by nature with those transcendent gifts which are requisite to make the epic poet. But much to his regret, he was not born in an epic age. Accordingly, in the absence of heroic deeds worthy of the lyre, he was obliged to seek in the great ideas of his times for the themes of song. These, however, he was not obliged to search for without the limits of his own capacious intellect; for in that was matured the highest wisdom of the age. Many of the profound truths laboriously excogitated by Hegel and the ablest contemporary metaphysicians of Germany sprang up spontaneously in the mind of Goethe, and have received from his pen their fit poetical expression. And besides uttering in verse all the wisdom of his own times, he has, also, in some of his works, reproduced the chivalry of the Middle Ages, and in others the unconscious beauty of the ancient Greeks. He has written every species of poetry; and, especially, has touched the lyre with all the lightness and grace of the old lyrical masters.

If Goethe was created an epic poet, Schiller was born a dramatist. More fortunate in his natal star than the former, the latter lived in an age that furnished a most appropriate

theatre for the exercise of his art and the display of his gifts. The nature of Schiller was in harmony with the tendencies of the times. He was patriotic, and struggled for freedom. He knew men, sympathized with the people, stood shoulder to shoulder with his fellows in the great revolutionary conflicts, and was thought worthy by the French republicans to be honored with a diploma of citizenship from "the great nation." But Goethe knew only man; led, never growing old, a high ideal life; and on arriving, advanced in years, at the summit of his career, he found no broad table-land whereon to wrestle for the prizes of life with his peers, but at once descended on the other side, unattended, into the valley of shadows. Schiller was a poet in spite of hindrances, and may almost be said to have taken the seat of the Muses by storm. Goethe sang from instinctive impulse, and appeared in the society of Apollo and the Gods like one in his native home. The tragic poet quickened the pulse of his life by artificial stimulants, overstrained his powers, and was possessed by his genius. The epic poet, pouring forth in song the thoughts that oppressed his breast, arose relieved from his labors, like a strong man refreshed with sport. True, Schiller directed his impulses towards his chosen aims, but it was like guiding a bark borne down by the rapids; while Goethe, following the instinctive promptings of nature, floated along upon a peaceful current at its "own sweet will." The poetry of Schiller is subjective; that of Goethe objective. Schiller adores freedom; Goethe worships nature. The former acknowledges the moral law of conscience, and exalts the true, the beautiful, and the good. The latter inculcates the harmony of all laws, unfolds the wisdom and beauty of things as they are, and makes common life poetical. The one stimulates us to the pursuit of unattainable ends; the other teaches us wisely to improve our actual possessions, and cheerfully to strive after possible perfections. Schiller was a priest of the ideal, Goethe an interpreter of the real world.

The same contrast exists between these two minds, which, running through all literary history, is to be seen between Plato and Aristotle, Epicurus and Zeno, Rousseau and Voltaire, Tasso and Ariosto, Lope and Calderon, Klopstock and Wieland, Herder and Lessing.

"Chronologically," says Gervinus, "the oppositions of the real and the ideal lay in nearly an inverted relation in these two poets. Goethe proceeded more from a real towards an ideal tendency; Schiller, after his acquaintance with Goethe and the ancients, endeavoured to approach the real from the opposite point of the ideal. The latter went back from speculation to poetical intuition; the former from poetical intuition advanced, if not to speculation, at least to contemplation; and while, in the traces of Goethe, there followed Oriental spiritualism, in those of Schiller, there came stanch patriotism, both in life and in poetry. The most obvious characteristics of their works were, therefore, altogether different from what would have been expected from their natural endowments. The poet most inclined to the practical and the material became the more exalted in his style of composition. The one who lived in the ideal world of art is, for many persons, too natural. Each hindered the other from falling into extremes; and accordingly, the lofty and often profound Schiller has been more generally admired, while the plainer and essentially more popular Goethe has been appropriated by the aristocratic class of society. He who in his aims had the most reference to men, has remained the favorite of women and youth; but he who abode in perennial youth has satisfied best the wants of man. The one who was all form and spirit pleased the people; but the one who both sought and gave more of matter delighted the cultivated few, who are better able to appreciate form. The genius apparently the most richly endowed has been confined within a narrower circle of influence; and the one apparently less gifted has found a more extensive one;—as Goethe himself said, if Schiller was generally esteemed less rich and productive, it was because his spirit streamed forth into all life, furnishing nutriment to, and supplying the deficiencies of, all men. Accordingly, the lines of the capacious nature of both cross each other in directions so various, that it is only when thus bound together, that they present us with one entire whole, in which we ought, without division, to delight and edify ourselves, as was, indeed, the intention of the men themselves."

Here we are compelled to pause; and, however reluctant,

to pass by, unnoticed, many of the brilliant authors whose names emblazon the page of recent German literature;—the mystical Novalis (Frederic von Hardenberg), who aimed at nothing less than to breathe the spirit of poetry into all literature, science, and life; the noble, though passive, and somewhat feminine, genius of the Schlegels, who laid the foundations of the new science of literary history; Tieck, the humorous and romantic reproducer of the fable of the Middle Ages; Fouqué, to whom we are indebted for the popular romance of "Undine," the delight of youth; Körner, him of the lyre and sword, who in the cause of his country's freedom both sang and bled; Uhland, whose mediæval ballads have produced the happiest effects upon recent German poetry, and whose songs of liberty and patriotism stand like a phalanx, firm amid the changes of literature; and, finally, Frederick Rückert, who may be cited as the representative of the new Minnesong, whose power of rhythm is incomparable, whose imagery glows with all the gorgeousness of the Orient, and whose sweet, musical lyrics are even inferior to his profound, though light and airy, epigrams.

Gervinus closes his history with the death of Goethe. Since that event, German poetry has degenerated, and become technical in form, and subjective in spirit. The fountains of poetic inspiration are sealed up; and nothing short of some great national convulsion, that shall break up the foundations of the present spiritual dynasty, will ever suffice to reopen them. There must be a new development of German life; the practical, as well as the ideal, side of the national character must be built up; there must arise some political Luther to introduce into the trades the freedom which is so largely enjoyed in religion, and so to modify the civil polity of the land, as to give to the German in future as ample liberty to act, as for the last half century he has had to think. Then first will our eyes be greeted with the dawn of another golden age of German poesy, of a poetic future which may be

more spiritual, without presenting less of material beauty, than the past; in which the reflection of years may be added to the passion of youth; and wherein, we may believe, will be harmoniously blended the various elements of all preceding literary epochs,—the valor of the ancient bards with the love of the sweet singers of chivalry, the religion of Klopstock with the gaiety of Wieland, the nationality of Lessing with the universality of Herder, and the soul of Schiller's verse with the form of Goethe's.

ARTISTS.

Im Fleiß kann dich die Biene meiſtern,
In der Geſchicklichkeit ein Wurm dein Lehrer ſeyn,
Dein Wiſſen theileſt du mit vorgezog'ne Geiſtern,
Die Kunſt, o Menſch, haſt du allein. "

Schiller.

MICHAEL ANGELO.*

He ranged the Host of Heaven: the Seraphim
Oped the bright eye and stretched the sturdy limb;
Man stood majestic in the strength of years,
And woman's beauty shone undimm'd by tears;
With Heaven's high valour on the strenuous brow,
With power to conquer fiends, whose frauds they know,
He formed the Angel-warriors for such strife,—
God saw the work was good, and gave them life."

HENRY REEVE.†

"Durch Michael Angelo ſtellt ſich die älteſte und mächtigſte Epoche der freigewordenen Kunſt dar, jene, wo ſie in ungeheuren Geburten ihre noch ungebändigte Kraft zeigt: wie nach den Dichtungen ſinnbildlicher Vorwelt die Erde nach den Umarmungen des Uranos erſt Titanen und himmelſtürmende Giganten hervorbrachte, bevor das ſanfte Reich ſtiller Götter hervorgieng."

Schelling.

THERE are few lives of eminent men that are harmonious; few that furnish, in all the facts, an image corresponding with their fame. But all things recorded of Michael Angelo Buonarotti agree together. He lived one life; he pursued one career. He accomplished extraordinary works; he uttered extraordinary words; and in this greatness was so little eccentricity, so true was he to the laws of the human mind,

* *Catalogue of One Hundred Drawings by* MICHAEL ANGELO, *composing the Tenth Exhibition of the Lawrence Gallery, at* 112 *St. Martin's Lane*. London, July, 1836.

† Characteristics of Painters, by Henry Reeve, Esq.

that his character and his works, like Sir Isaac Newton's, seem rather a part of nature than arbitrary productions of the human will. Especially we venerate his moral fame. Whilst his name belongs to the highest class of genius, his life contains in it no injurious influence. Every line in his biography might be read to the human race with wholesome effect. The means, the materials of his activity, were coarse enough to be appreciated, being addressed for the most part to the eye; the results, sublime and all innocent. A purity severe and even terrible goes out from the lofty productions of his pencil and his chisel, and still more from the more perfect sculpture of his own life, which heals and exalts. "He nothing common did, or mean," and dying at the end of near ninety years, had not yet become old, but was engaged in executing his grand conceptions in the ineffaceable architecture of St. Peter's.

Above all men whose history we know, Michael Angelo presents us with the perfect image of the artist. He is an eminent master in the four fine arts, Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, and Poetry. In three of them by visible means, and in poetry by words, he strove to express the Idea of Beauty. This idea possessed him, and determined all his activity. Beauty in the largest sense, beauty inward and outward, comprehending grandeur as a part, and reaching to goodness as its soul,—this to receive and this to impart, was his genius.

It is not without pleasure that we see, amid the falsehood and griefs of the human race, a soul at intervals born to behold and create only beauty. So shall not the indescribable charm of the natural world, the great spectacle of morn and evening which shut and open the most disastrous day, want observers. The ancient Greeks called the world κόσμος, *Beauty;* a name which, in our artificial state of society, sounds fanciful and impertinent. Yet, in proportion as the mind of man rises above the servitude to wealth and a pursuit

of mean pleasures, he perceives, that what is most real is most beautiful, and that, by the contemplation of such objects, he is taught and exalted. This truth, that perfect beauty and perfect goodness are one, was made known to Michael Angelo; and we shall endeavour by sketches from his life to show the direction and limitations of his search after this element.

In considering a life dedicated to the study of Beauty, it is natural to inquire, what is Beauty? Is this charming element capable of being so abstracted by the human mind, as to become a distinct and permanent object? We answer, Beauty cannot be defined. Like Truth, it is an ultimate aim of the human being. It does not lie within the limits of the understanding. "The nature of the beautiful,"—we gladly borrow the language of Moritz, a German critic,—"consists herein, that because the understanding in the presence of the beautiful cannot ask, 'Why is it beautiful?' for that reason is it so. There is no standard whereby the understanding can determine, whether objects are beautiful or otherwise. What other standard of the beautiful exists, than the entire circuit of all harmonious proportions of the great system of nature? All particular beauties scattered up and down in nature are only so far beautiful, as they suggest more or less in themselves this entire circuit of harmonious proportions." This great Whole, the understanding cannot embrace. Beauty may be felt. It may be produced. But it cannot be defined.

The Italian artists sanction this view of beauty by describing it as *il più nell' uno*, "the many in one," or multitude in unity, intimating that what is truly beautiful seems related to all nature. A beautiful person has a kind of universality, and appears to have truer conformity to all pleasing objects in external nature than another. Every great work of art seems to take up into itself the excellencies of all works, and to present, as it were, a miniature of nature.

In relation to this element of Beauty, the minds of men divide themselves into two classes. In the first place, all men have an organization corresponding more or less to the entire system of nature, and therefore a power of deriving pleasure from Beauty. This is Taste. In the second place, certain minds, more closely harmonized with nature, possess the power of abstracting Beauty from things, and reproducing it in new forms, on any object to which accident may determine their activity; as stone, canvas, song, history. This is Art.

Since Beauty is thus an abstraction of the harmony and proportion that reigns in all nature, it is therefore studied in nature, and not in what does not exist. Hence the celebrated French maxim of Rhetoric, *Rien de beau que le vrai;* "Nothing is beautiful but what is true." It has a much wider application than to Rhetoric; as wide, namely, as the terms of the proposition admit. In art, Michael Angelo is himself but a document or verification of this maxim. He labored to express the beautiful, in the entire conviction that it was only to be attained unto, by knowledge of the true. The common eye is satisfied with the surface on which it rests. The wise eye knows that it is surface, and, if beautiful, only the result of interior harmonies, which, to him who knows them, compose the image of higher beauty. Moreover, he knew well, that only by an understanding of the internal mechanism, can the outside be faithfully delineated. The walls of houses are transparent to the architect. The symptoms disclose the constitution to the physician; and to the artist it belongs by a better knowledge of anatomy, and, within anatomy, of life and thought, to acquire the power of true drawing. "The human form," says Goethe, "cannot be comprehended merely through seeing its surface. It must be stripped of the muscles; its parts separated; its joints observed; its divisions marked; its action and counter action learned; the hidden, the

reposing, the foundation of the apparent, must be searched, if one would really see and imitate what moves as a beautiful inseparable whole in living waves before the eye." Michael Angelo dedicated himself, from his childhood to his death, to a toilsome observation of nature. The first anecdote recorded of him shows him to be already on the right road. Granacci, a painter's apprentice, having lent him, when a boy, a print of St. Antony beaten by devils, together with some colors and pencils, he went to the fish-market to observe the form and color of fins and of the eyes of fish. Cardinal Farnese one day found him, when an old man, walking alone in the Coliseum, and expressed his surprise at finding him solitary amidst the ruins; to which he replied, "I go yet to school that I may continue to learn." And one of the last drawings in his portfolio is a sublime hint of his own feeling; for it is a sketch of an old man with a long beard, in a go-cart, with an hour-glass before him; and the motto, *Ancora imparo*, "I still learn."

In this spirit he devoted himself to the study of anatomy for twelve years; we ought to say rather, as long as he lived. The depth of his knowledge in anatomy has no parallel among the artists of modern times. Most of his designs, his contemporaries inform us, were made with a pen, and in the style of an engraving on copper or wood; a manner more expressive, but not admitting of correction. When Michael Angelo would begin a statue, he made first on paper the *skeleton*; afterwards, upon another paper, the same figure clothed with muscles. The studies of the statue of Christ in the Church of Minerva at Rome, made in this manner, were long preserved.

It strikes those who have never given attention to the arts of design, as surprising that the artist should find so much to study, in a fabric of such limited parts and dimensions as the human body. But it is the effect of reflection to disclose evermore a closer analogy between the finite form and the

infinite inhabitant. Man is the highest, and indeed the only proper object of plastic art. There needs no better proof of our instinctive feeling of the immense expression of which the human figure is capable, than the uniform tendency which the religion of every country has betrayed towards Anthropomorphism, or attributing to the Deity the human form. And behold the effect of this familiar object every day! No acquaintance with the secrets of its mechanism, no degrading views of human nature, not the most swinish compost of mud and blood that was ever misnamed philosophy, can avail to hinder us from doing involuntary reverence to any exhibition of majesty or surpassing beauty in human clay.

Yet our knowledge of its highest expression we owe to the Fine Arts. Not easily in this age will any man acquire by himself such perceptions of the dignity or grace of the human frame, as the student of art owes to the remains of Phidias, to the Apollo, the Jove, the paintings and statues of Michael Angelo, and the works of Canova. There are now in Italy, both on canvas and in marble, forms and faces which the imagination is enriched by contemplating. Goethe says, that he is but half himself who has never seen the Juno in the Rondanini palace at Rome. Seeing these works true to human nature and yet superhuman, "we feel that we are greater than we know." Seeing these works, we appreciate the taste which led Michael Angelo, against the taste and against the admonition of his patrons, to cover the walls of churches with unclothed figures, "improper," says his biographer, "for the place, but proper for the exhibition of all the pomp of his profound knowledge."

The love of beauty which never passes beyond outline and color, was too slight an object to occupy the powers of his genius. There is a closer relation than is commonly thought between the fine arts and the useful arts; and it is an essential fact in the history of Michael Angelo, that his love of beauty is made solid and perfect by his deep understanding of the

mechanic arts. Architecture is the bond that unites the elegant and the economical arts, and his skill in this is a pledge of his capacity in both kinds. His Titanic handwriting in marble and travertine is to be found in every part of Rome and Florence; and even at Venice, on defective evidence, he is said to have given the plan of the bridge of the Rialto. Nor was his a skill in ornament, or confined to the outline and designs of towers and façades, but a thorough acquaintance with all the secrets of the art, with all the details of economy and strength.

When the Florentines united themselves with Venice, England, and France, to oppose the power of the Emperor Charles V., Michael Angelo was appointed Military Architect and Engineer, to superintend the erection of the necessary works. He visited Bologna to inspect its celebrated fortifications, and, on his return, constructed a fortification on the heights of San Miniato, which commands the city and environs of Florence. On the 24th of October, 1529, the Prince of Orange, general of Charles V., encamped on the hills surrounding the city, and his first operation was to throw up a rampart to storm the bastion of San Miniato. His design was frustrated by the providence of Michael Angelo. Michael made such good resistance, that the Prince directed the artillery to demolish the tower. The artist hung mattresses of wool on the side exposed to the attack, and by means of a bold projecting cornice, from which they were suspended, a considerable space was left between them and the wall. This simple expedient was sufficient, and the Prince was obliged to turn his siege into a blockade.

After an active and successful service to the city for six months, Michael Angelo was informed of a treachery that was ripening within the walls. He communicated it to the government, with his advice upon it; but was mortified by receiving from the government reproaches at his credulity and fear. He replied, "that it was useless for him to take care

of the walls, if they were determined not to take care of themselves;" and he withdrew privately from the city to Ferrara, and thence to Venice. The news of his departure occasioned a general concern in Florence, and he was instantly followed with apologies and importunities to return. He did so, and resumed his office.

On the 21st of March, 1530, the Prince of Orange assaulted the city by storm. Michael Angelo is represented as having ordered his defence so vigorously, that the Prince was compelled to retire. By the treachery, however, of the general of the Republic, Malatesta Baglioni, all his skill was rendered unavailing, and the city capitulated on the 9th of August. The excellence of the works constructed by our artist has been approved by Vauban, who visited them and took a plan of them.

In Rome, Michael Angelo was consulted by Pope Paul III. in building the fortifications of San Borgo. He built the stairs of Ara Celi, leading to the Church once the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus; he arranged the piazza of the Capitol, and built its porticos. He was charged with rebuilding the Pons Palatinus over the Tiber. He prepared, accordingly, a large quantity of blocks of travertine, and was proceeding with the work, when, through the intervention of his rivals, this work was taken from him, and intrusted to Nanni di Bacio Bigio, who plays but a pitiful part in Michael's history. Nanni sold the travertine, and filled up the piers with gravel at a small expense. Michael Angelo made known his opinion, that the bridge could not resist the force of the current; and one day riding over it on horseback with his friend Vasari, he cried, "George, this bridge trembles under us; let us ride faster, lest it fall whilst we are upon it." It fell, five years after it was built, in 1557, and is still called the "Broken Bridge."

Versatility of talent in men of undoubted ability always awakens the liveliest interest; and we observe with delight,

that, besides the sublimity and even extravagance of Michael Angelo, he possessed an unexpected dexterity in minute mechanical contrivances. When the Sistine Chapel was prepared for him that he might paint the ceiling, he found the platform on which he was to work, suspended by ropes which passed through the ceiling. Michael demanded of San Gallo, the Pope's architect, how these holes were to be repaired in the picture? San Gallo replied, "That was for him to consider, for the platform could be constructed in no other way." Michael removed the whole, and constructed a moveable platform to rest and roll upon the floor, which is believed to be the same simple contrivance which is used in Rome, at this day, to repair the walls of churches. He gave this model to a carpenter, who made it so profitable as to furnish a dowry for his two daughters. He was so nice in tools, that he made with his own hand the wimbles, the files, the rasps, the chisels, and all other irons and instruments which he needed in sculpture; and in painting, he not only mixed but ground his colors himself, trusting no one.

And not only was this discoverer of Beauty, and its teacher among men, rooted and grounded in those severe laws of practical skill, which genius can never teach, and which must be learned by practice alone, but he was one of the most industrious men that ever lived. His diligence was so great, that it is wonderful how he endured its fatigues. The midnight battles, the forced marches, the winter campaigns of Julius Cæsar or Charles XII., do not indicate greater strength of body or of mind. He finished the gigantic painting of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in twenty months, a fact which enlarges, it has been said, the known powers of man. Indeed he toiled so assiduously at this painful work, that, for a long time after, he was unable to see any picture but by holding it over his head. A little bread and wine was all his nourishment; and he told Vasari, that he often slept in his clothes, both because he was too weary to undress, and

because he would rise in the night and go immediately to work. "I have found," says his friend, "some of his designs in Florence, where; whilst may be seen the greatness of his genius, it may also be known, that when he wished to take Minerva from the head of Jove, there needed the hammer of Vulcan." He used to make to a single figure nine, ten, or twelve heads before he could satisfy himself, seeking that there should be in the composition a certain universal grace such as nature makes, saying, that "he needed to have his compasses in his eye, and not in his hand, because the hands work whilst the eye judges." He was accustomed to say, "Those figures alone are good, from which the labor is scraped off, when the scaffolding is taken away."

At near eighty years, he began in marble a group of four figures for a dead Christ; because he said, to exercise himself with the mallet was good for his health.

And what did he accomplish? It does not fall within our design to give an account of his works, yet for the sake of the completeness of our sketch we will name the principal ones. Sculpture he called *his* art, and to it he regretted afterwards he had not singly given himself. The style of his paintings is monumental; and even his poetry partakes of that character. In sculpture, his greatest work is the statue of Moses in the Church of Pietro in Vincolo, in Rome. It is a sitting statue of colossal size, and is designed to embody the Hebrew Law. The lawgiver is supposed to gaze upon the worshippers of the golden calf. The majestic wrath of the figure daunts the beholder. In the Piazza del Gran Duca at Florence, stands, in the open air, his David about to hurl the stone at Goliah. In the Church called the Minerva, at Rome, is his Christ; an object of so much devotion to the people, that the right foot has been shod with a brazen sandal to prevent it from being kissed away. In St. Peter's, is his Pietà, or dead Christ in the arms of his mother.

In the Mausoleum of the Medici at Florence, are the tombs of Lorenzo and Cosmo, with the grand statues of Night and Day, and Aurora and Twilight. Several statues of less fame, and bas-reliefs, are in Rome and Florence, and Paris.

His Paintings are in the Sistine Chapel, of which he first covered the ceiling with the story of the creation, in successive compartments, with the great series of the Prophets and Sibyls in alternate tablets, and a series of greater and smaller fancy-pieces in the lunettes. This is his capital work painted in fresco. Every one of these pieces, every figure, every hand, and foot, and finger, is a study of anatomy and design. Slighting the secondary arts of coloring, and all the aids of graceful finish, he aimed exclusively, as a stern designer, to express the vigor and magnificence of his conceptions. Upon the wall, over the altar, is painted the Last Judgment.

Of his designs, the most celebrated is the cartoon representing soldiers coming out of the bath and arming themselves; an incident in the war of Pisa. The wonderful merit of this drawing, which contrasts the extremes of relaxation and vigor, is conspicuous even in the coarsest prints.

Of his genius for Architecture, it is sufficient to say that he built St. Peter's, an ornament of the earth. He said he would hang the Pantheon in the air; and he redeemed his pledge by suspending that vast cupola, without offence to grace or to stability, over the astonished beholder. He did not live to complete the work; but is there not something affecting in the spectacle of an old man, on the verge of ninety years, carrying steadily onward, with the heat and determination of manhood, his poetic conceptions into progressive execution, surmounting by the dignity of his purposes all obstacles and all enmities, and only hindered by the limits of life from fulfilling his designs? Very slowly came he, after months and years to the dome. At last he began to model it very small

in wax. When it was finished, he had it copied larger in wood, and by this model it was built. Long after it was completed, and often since, to this day, rumors are occasionally spread that it is giving way, and it is said to have been injured by unskilful attempts to repair it. Benedict XIV., during one of these panics, sent for the architect Marchese Polini, to come to Rome and examine it. Polini put an end to all the various projects of repairs, by the satisfying sentence, "The cupola does not start, and if it should start, nothing can be done but to pull it down."

The best commendation of his works is in their influence. The impulse of his grand style was instantaneous upon his contemporaries. Every stroke of his pencil moved the pencil in Raphael's hand. Raphael said, "I bless God I live in the times of Michael Angelo." Sir Joshua Reynolds, two centuries later, declared to the British Institution, "I feel a self-congratulation in knowing myself capable of such sensations as he intended to excite."

It will be readily conceded, that a man of such habits and such deeds, made good his pretensions to a clear perception and to accurate delineation of external beauty. But inimitable as his works are, in all three arts, his whole life confessed that his hand was all inadequate to express his thought. "He alone," he said, "was an artist whose hands can perfectly execute what his mind has conceived;" and such was his own mastery, that they said, "the marble was flexible in his hands." Yet, contemplating ever with love the idea of absolute beauty, he was still dissatisfied with his own work. The things proposed to him in his imagination were such, that, for not being able with his hands to express so grand and terrible conceptions, he often abandoned his work. This is the reason why he so often only blocked his statue. A little before he died, he burned a great number of designs, sketches, and cartoons made by him, being impatient of their defects. Grace in living forms, except in very rare instances, did not

satisfy him. He never made but one portrait, (a cartoon of Messer Tommaso di Cavalieri,) because he abhorred to draw a likeness unless it were of infinite beauty.

Such was his devotion to art. But let no man suppose, that the images which his spirit worshipped were mere transcripts of external grace, or that this profound soul was taken or holden in the chains of superficial beauty. To him, of all men, it was transparent. Through it, he beheld the eternal spiritual beauty which ever clothes itself with grand and graceful outlines, as its appropriate form. He spoke of external grace as "the frail and weary weed, in which God dresses the soul which he has called into Time." As from the fire, heat cannot be divided, no more can beauty from the eternal." He was conscious in his efforts of higher aims than to address the eye. He sought, through the eye, to reach the soul. Therefore, as, in the first place, he sought to approach the Beautiful by the study of the True, so he failed not to make the next step of progress, and to seek Beauty in its highest form, that of Goodness. The sublimity of his art is in his life. He did not only build a divine temple, and paint and carve saints and prophets. He lived out the same inspiration. There is no spot upon his fame. The fire and sanctity of his pencil breathe in his words. When he was informed that Paul IV. desired he should paint again the side of the chapel where the Last Judgment was painted, because of the indecorous nudity of the figures, he replied, "Tell the Pope that this is easily done. Let him reform the world, and he will find the pictures will reform themselves." He saw clearly, that if the corrupt and vulgar eyes, that could see nothing but indecorum in his terrific prophets and angels, could be purified as his own were pure, they would only find occasion for devotion in the same figures. As he refused to undo his own work, Daniel di Volterra was employed to clothe the figures; hence ludicrously called *Il Braghettone*. When the Pope suggested to him, that the chapel would be enriched,

if the figures were ornamented with gold, Michael Angelo replied, "In those days, gold was not worn; and the characters I have painted were neither rich nor desirous of wealth, but holy men, with whom gold was an object of contempt."

It was not until he was in the seventy-third year of his age, that he undertook the building of St. Peter's. On the death of San Gallo, the architect of the church, Paul III. first entreated, then commanded the aged artist to assume the charge of this great work, which, though commenced forty years before, was only commenced by Bramante, and ill continued by San Gallo. Michael Angelo, who believed in his own ability as a sculptor, but distrusted his capacity as an architect, at first refused and then reluctantly complied. His heroic stipulation with the Pope was worthy of the man and the work. He required that he should be permitted to accept this work without any fee or reward, because he undertook it as a religious act; and, furthermore, that he should be absolute master of the whole design, free to depart from the plans of San Gallo and to alter what had been already done.

This disinterestedness and spirit,—no fee and no interference,—reminds one of the reward named by the ancient Persian. When importuned to claim some compensation of the empire for the important services he had rendered it, he demanded, "that he and his should neither command nor obey, but should be free." However, as it was undertaken, so was it performed. When the Pope, delighted with one of his chapels, sent him one hundred crowns of gold, as one month's wages, Michael sent them back. The Pope was angry, but the artist was immovable. Amidst endless annoyances, from the envy and interest of the office-holders and agents in the work whom he had displaced, he steadily ripened and executed his vast ideas. The combined desire to fulfil, in everlasting stone, the conceptions of his mind, and to complete his worthy offering to Almighty God, sustained him through numberless vexations with unbroken spirit. In

answer to the importunate solicitations of the Duke of Tuscany, that he would come to Florence, he replies, "that to leave St. Peter's in the state in which it now was, would be to ruin the structure, and thereby be guilty of a great sin;" that he hoped he should shortly see the execution of his plans brought to such a point that they could no longer be interfered with, and this was the capital object of his wishes, "if," he adds, "I do not commit a great crime, by disappointing the cormorants who are daily hoping to get rid of me."

A natural fruit of the nobility of his spirit is his admiration of Dante, to whom two of his sonnets are addressed. He shared Dante's "deep contempt of the vulgar, not of the simple inhabitants of lowly streets or humble cottages, but of, that sordid and abject crowd of all classes, and all places, who obscure, as much as in them lies, every beam of beauty in the universe." In like manner, he possessed an intense love of solitude. He lived alone, and never, or very rarely, took his meals with any person. As will be supposed, he had a passion for the country, and in old age speaks with extreme pleasure of his residence with the hermits in the mountains of Spoleti; so much so, that he says he is "only half in Rome, since, truly, peace is only to be found in the woods." Traits of an almost savage independence mark all his history. Although he was rich, he lived like a poor man, and never would receive a present from any person; because it seemed to him, that if a man gave him any thing, he was always obligated to that individual. His friend Vasari mentions one occasion on which his scruples were overcome. It seems that Michael was accustomed to work at night, with a pasteboard cap or helmet on his head, into which he stuck a candle, that his work might be lighted and his hands at liberty. Vasari observed that he did not use wax candles, but a better sort made of the tallow of goats. He therefore sent him four bundles of them, containing forty pounds. His servant brought them after night-fall, and presented them to him.

Michael Angelo refused to receive them. "Look you, Messer Michael Angelo," replied the man, "these candles have well nigh broken my arm, and I will not carry them back; but just here, before your door, is a spot of soft mud, and they will stand upright in it very well, and there I will light them all."—"Put them down, then," returned Michael, "since you shall not make a bonfire at my gate." Meantime he was liberal to profusion to his old domestic Urbino, to whom he gave at one time two thousand crowns, and made him rich in his service.

Michael Angelo was of that class of men who are too superior to the multitude around them to command a full and perfect sympathy. They stand in the attitude rather of appeal from their contemporaries to their race. But he did not, therefore, fix his eye upon his own greatness, and avert it from the good works of others. It has been the defect of some great men, that they did not duly appreciate or did not confess the talents and virtues of others, and so lacked one of the richest sources of happiness and one of the best elements of humanity. This apathy perhaps happens as often from preoccupied attention as from jealousy. It has been supposed that artists more than others are liable to this defect. But Michael Angelo's praise on many works is to this day the stamp of fame. Michael Angelo said of Masaccio's pictures, that when they were first painted they must have been alive. He said of his predecessor, the architect Bramante, that he laid the first stone of St. Peter's, clear, insulated, luminous, with fit design for a vast structure. He often expressed his admiration of Cellini's bust of Altoviti. He loved to express admiration of Titian, of Donatelli, of Ghiberti, of Brunelleschi. And it is said, that, when he left Florence to go to Rome, to build St. Peter's, he turned his horse's head on the last hill from which the noble dome of the Cathedral (built by Brunelleschi) is visible, and said, "Like you I will not build; better than you I cannot." Indeed, as we have said,

the reputation of many works of art now in Italy derives a sanction from the tradition of his praise. It is more commendation to say, "This was Michael Angelo's favorite," than to say, "This was carried to Paris by Napoleon." Michael, however, had the philosophy to say, "Only an inventor can use the inventions of others."

There is yet one more trait in Michael Angelo's history, which humanizes his character without lessening its loftiness; this is his platonic love. He was deeply enamoured of the most accomplished lady of the time, Vittoria Colonna, the widow of the Marquis di Pescara, who, after the death of her husband, devoted herself to letters, and to the writing of religious poetry. She was also an admirer of his genius, and came to Rome repeatedly to see him. To her his sonnets are addressed; and they all breathe a chaste and divine regard, which is not to be paralleled in any amatory poetry except that of Dante and Petrarch. They are founded on the thought, that beauty is the virtue of the body, as virtue is the beauty of the soul; that a beautiful person is sent into the world as an image of the divine beauty, not to provoke but to purify the sensual into an intellectual and divine love. He therefore enthrones his mistress as a benignant angel, who is to refine and perfect his own character. Condivi, his friend, has left this testimony: "I have often heard Michael Angelo reason and discourse upon love, but never heard him speak otherwise than upon platonic love. As for me, I am ignorant what Plato has said upon this subject; but this I know very well, that, in a long intimacy, I never heard from his mouth a single word that was not perfectly decorous, and having for its object to extinguish in youth every improper desire, and that his own nature is a stranger to depravity." The poems themselves cannot be read without awakening sentiments of virtue. An eloquent vindication of their philosophy may be found in a paper by Signor Radici, in the London "Retrospective Review," and, by the Italian scholar, in the Discourse

of Benedetto Varchi upon one sonnet of Michael Angelo, contained in the volume of his poems published by Biagioli, from which, in substance, the views of Radici are taken.

Towards his end, there seems to have grown in him an invincible appetite of dying, for he knew that his spirit could only enjoy contentment after death. So vehement was this desire that, he says, "his soul can no longer be appeased by the wonted seductions of painting and sculpture." A fine melancholy, not unrelieved by his habitual heroism, pervades his thoughts on this subject. At the age of eighty years, he wrote to Vasari, sending him various spiritual sonnets he had been composing, and tells him "he is at the end of his life, that he is careful where he bends his thoughts, that he sees it is already 24 o'clock, and no fancy arose in his mind but DEATH was sculptured on it." In conversing upon this subject with one of his friends, that person remarked, that Michael might well grieve that one who was incessant in his creative labors should have no restoration. "No," replied Michael, "it is nothing; for, if life pleases us, death being a work of the same master, ought not to displease us." But a nobler sentiment, uttered by him, is contained in his reply to a letter of Vasari, who had informed him of the rejoicings made at the house of his nephew Lionardo, at Florence, over the birth of another Buonarotti. Michael admonishes him, "that a man ought not to smile, when all those around him weep; and that we ought not to show that joy when a child is born, which should be reserved for the death of one who has lived well.

Amidst all these witnesses to his independence, his generosity, his purity, and his devotion, are we not authorized to say, that this man was penetrated with the love of the highest beauty, that is, goodness; that his was a soul so enamoured of grace, that it could not stoop to meanness or depravity; that art was to him no means of livelihood or road to fame, but the end of living, as it was the organ through which he

sought to suggest lessons of an unutterable wisdom; that here was a man who lived to demonstrate, that to the human faculties, on every hand, worlds of grandeur and grace are opened, which no profane eye, and no indolent eye, can behold, but which to see and to enjoy, demands the severest discipline of all the physical, intellectual, and moral faculties of the individual?

The city of Florence, on the river Arno, still treasures the fame of this man. There, his picture hangs in every window; there, the tradition of his opinions meets the traveller in every spot. "Do you see that statue of St. George? Michael Angelo asked it, why it did not speak."—"Do you see this fine church of Santa Maria Novella? It is that which Michael Angelo called 'his bride.'"—"Look at these bronze gates of the Baptistery, with their high reliefs, cast by Ghiberti five hundred years ago. Michael Angelo said, 'they were fit to be the gates of Paradise.'"—Here is the church, the palace, the Laurentian library, he built. Here is his own house. In the church of Santa Croce are his mortal remains. Whilst he was yet alive, he asked that he might be buried in that church, in such a spot that the dome of the cathedral might be visible from his tomb, when the doors of the church stood open. And there, and so, is he laid. The innumerable pilgrims, whom the genius of Italy draws to the city, duly visit this church, which is to Florence what Westminster Abbey is to England. There, near the tomb of Nicholas Machiavelli, the historian and philosopher; of Galileus Galileo, the great-hearted astronomer; of Boccaccio; and of Alfieri, stands the monument of Michael Angelo Buonarotti. Three significant garlands are sculptured on the tomb; they should be four, but that his countrymen feared their own partiality. The forehead of the bust, esteemed a faithful likeness, is furrowed with eight deep wrinkles one above another. The traveller from a distant continent, who gazes on that marble brow, feels that he is not a stranger in the foreign church; for

the great name of Michael Angelo sounds hospitably in his ear. He was not a citizen of any country; he belonged to the human race; he was a brother and a friend to all who acknowledge the beauty that beams in universal nature, and who seek by labor and self-denial to approach its source in perfect goodness.

CANOVA.

" Natura, onde legge ebbe ogni cosa,
Chi pietra, e moto in un congiunti vede,
Per un instante si riman pensosa!"
Pindemonte on the Hebe of Canova.

I WELL remember when I first saw the work which called forth this graceful flattery. We saw very little sculpture here, and there was a longing for those serene creations, which correspond, both from the material used and the laws of the art, to the highest state of the mind. For the arts are no luxury, no mere ornament and stimulus to a civic and complicated existence, as the worldling and the ascetic alike delight in representing them to be, but the herbarium in which are preserved the fairest flowers of man's existence, the magic mirror by whose aid all its phases are interpreted, the circle into which the various spirits of the elements may be invoked, and made to reveal the secret they elsewhere manifest only in large revolutions of time; and what philosophy, with careful steps and anxious ear, has long sought in vain, is oftentimes revealed at once by a flash from this torch.

With thoughts like these, not clearly understood, but firmly rooted in the mind, was read an advertisement of "some of Canova's principal works, copied by his pupils." Canova! The name was famous. He was the pride of

modern Italy, the prince of modern art, and now we were to see enough of the expressions of his thought to know how God, nature, and man stood related in the mind of this man. He had studied these in their eternal affinities, and written the result on stone. How much we should learn of the past, how stand assured in the present, how feel the wings grow for the future!

With such feelings we entered the cold and dingy room, far better prepared surely than the chosen people, when they saw the prophet descend from the mount of vision, with the record of the moral law also inscribed on stone. For they were led, but we were seekers. But, alas! alas! what dread downfall from this height of expectation! The Hebe, so extolled above, was the first object that met the eye. Hebe! Was this the ever-blooming joy that graced the golden tables?

Then there were the Dancers, there the Magdalen, Gods and Goddesses, Geniuses, with torches reversed, and other bright ideals of our thought, all so graceful, so beautifully draped, and so—French it seemed to us, our own street figures infinitely refined—can this be all? Does not the artist, even, read any secret in his time beyond the love of approbation, the shades of sentiment, and the cultivation of the physique, not for health, but to charm the eyes of other men? We did not wish to see the old Greek majesty; what *that* says we knew. The coarsest plaster cast had shown us what they knew of the fulness of strength, fulness of repose, equipoise of faculties desirable for man. But was there nothing for us? No high meaning to the dark mysteries of our day, no form of peculiar beauty hid beneath its beggarly disguises?

Time has not changed this view of the works of Canova; but, after the first chill of disappointment was over, when we no longer expected to find a genius, a poet in the artist, we have learnt to value him as a man of taste, and to understand

why he filled such a niche in the history of his time. And what we partly knew before, has now been made more clear by Missirini's life of him, which has only of late fallen in our way, though published as early as 1824.

As the book has not, we believe, been translated, a notice of leading facts in the life, and version of passages in which Canova expressed his thoughts, may be acceptable to the few who have time to spare from rooting up tares in the field of polemics or politics, and can believe there is use in looking at the flowers of this heavenly garden through the fence which forbids Yankee hands their darling privilege to touch, at least, if they may not take.

Canova, as we have said, was not a genius, he did not work from the centre, he saw not into his own time, cast no light upon the future. As a man of taste he refined the methods of his art, reformed it from abuses, well understood its more definite objects, and, as far as talent and high culture could, fulfilled them. If not himself a great artist, he was, by his words and works, an able commentator on great artists. And intermediate powers of this kind must be held in honor, like ambassadors between nations, that might otherwise remain insular and poor.

As a character, he was religious in modesty, reverence, and fidelity. Life was truly to him a matter of growth, and action only so far valuable as expressive of this fact. It is therefore a pleasure to look on the chronicle of marble, where the meaning of his days is engraved. A monotony of conception, indeed, makes this a brief study, though the names alone of his works fill eighteen pages of Missirini's book. In labor, he was more indefatigable, probably, than if he had lived a deeper life; his was all one scene of outward labor, and meditation of its means, from childhood to advanced age; he never felt the needs common to higher natures, of leaving the mind at times fallow, that it may be prepared for a richer harvest; he never waited in powerless submission, for the

uprise of the tide of soul. His works show this want of depth, and his views of art no less; but both have great merits as far as they go,—his works in their execution, his views as to accurate perceptions of the range of art, and the use of means.

It is intended to make farther use of the remarks of Canova in another way. But it will not forestall but rather prepare for the relation in which they will there be placed to present them here. Not all are given, but only that portion most important in the eyes of the translator.

These sayings of Canova were written down from his lips by his friend and biographer, Missirini, who seems an Italian in sensibility, and an Englishman in quiet self-respect. He has obviously given us, not only the thought but the turn of expression; there is in the original a penetrating gentleness and artist-like grace, which give a charm to very slight intimations. This fineness of tone, if not represented in its perfection by the English idiom, will not, I hope, be quite lost, for it is more instructive than the thoughts in detail. The same purity of manner, which so well expresses the habit of intercourse with the purest material and noblest of arts, gave dignity to Mr. Greenough's late memorial to Congress on the subject of his Washington; and the need there displayed of stating anew to this country rules of taste, which have passed into maxims elsewhere, is reason enough why such remarks as these of Canova should be offered to the careful attention of persons, who wish to fit themselves for intelligent enjoyment of the beautiful arts.

When Missirini, struck by the excellence of what he wrote down from the familiar discourse of the master, urged him to publish his thoughts in print, he always declined, saying, "opinions, precepts, rules are well enough in their place, but example is far more valuable. It is my profession to work as well as I can, not to lecture; nor would I for treasures, take upon myself the task of arguing with irritable pedants."

He said, also, that he did not confide in his own judgment, as to the value of his observations; he knew only that they were "dictated by the intimate feeling of art, by meditation bent constantly upon it, and, finally, the mistress experience;" that he had no pretensions which justified his imposing his opinion on others, but could only offer it for the private judgment of each hearer.

Let the reader, then, receive the following remarks as they were made, as familiar talk of the artist with the friends who loved him, and, if awake to such sympathies, or with a mind exercised on such topics, he will scarcely fail to derive instruction and pleasure from the gentle flow of earnest thought, and the air of delicacy and retirement in the mind of the thinker. We are with him in the still cool air of the studio, blocks of marble lie around, grand in their yet undisclosed secret, and the forms of nymphs and heroes inform the walls with their almost perfected beauty. The profound interpretations of a poetic soul, weaving into new forms the symbols of nature, and revealing her secret by divine re-creation, will not there be felt; the thoughts of this sculptor are only new readings of the text, faithful glosses in the margin, but, as such, in themselves refined, and for us, in a high degree, refining and suggestive. Genius must congratulate herself on so faithful a disciple, though he be not a son, but a minister only of her royal house; and Art, having poured forth her gifts, must be grateful to one who knew so well how to prize, select, and dispose them.

OBSERVATIONS OF CANOVA, RECORDED BY MISSIRINI.

I.

Even because Canova had so at heart the interests of the arts, it grieved him to see such a multitude of young men devoting themselves to this service; for he said, they cannot,

for the most part, fail to be poor and unhappy. Italy and the world are filled to satiety with works of art, and what employment can all these disciples find?—But the worst is that they will foster brute mediocrity, for excellence was never the portion of many, and through excellence alone can any good be effected. The academies should accept all to try the capacity of each, but when they have ascertained that a pupil has no extraordinary powers for art, then dismiss him, that he may, as a citizen, apply himself to some useful calling; for I fear that this multitude who are not fit for the upward path will drag down with them those who are better, and, where they have begun to do ill, will run into every folly; for the arts, turned into the downward direction, find no stay, but are soon precipitated into total ruin.

II.

I do not call a work fine, merely because I find no faults in it. The most sublime works are not faultless; they are so great because, beside the beauty which satisfies the intellect, they have the beauty of inspiration, which assails the senses and triumphs over the heart; they have within themselves the affection, within themselves the life, and make us weep, rejoice, or be troubled at their will; and this is the true beauty.

III.

I am always studying the shortest and simplest way to reach my object, as the blow which comes most direct strikes with most force; whence I would not wish to be delayed by vain ornaments and distractions.

IV.

Imitate nature alone, not any particular master. If you go to the master, let it be that he may point out to you how you may see and copy nature, as she was by him seen and

copied; study nature through his eyes, and choose rather the ancient, the Greek masters, for they more than any others had a free field for seeing and copying nature, and knew better than any others how to do it.

But if you wish to imitate a master, especially in painting, do with him as with nature; that is to say, as in nature you choose the fairest features, so in the master choose out his better parts, and leave those in which he has shown his human imperfections. Too often the worst parts of a famous master are imitated as much as any.

V.

Do you seek in nature some beautiful part, and fail to find it, be not discouraged, continue long enough the search, and you will see it in some form at last; for all is to be found in nature, provided you know how to look for it.

But if you wish to be saved many and tedious researches, and proceed straight forward, I will teach you this way.

Become first of all skilful in your art, that is, know drawing, anatomy, and dignity, feel grace, understand and enjoy beauty, be moved by your own conceptions, possess, in short, all the requisites of art in an eminent degree, and you will find yourself in the secure way I mean.—And beware that you take no other.—Then, if you find in nature some trait of admirable grace and beauty, it will suffice; for you will know how to bring all other parts into harmony with this, and thus produce beautiful and perfect wholes.

But this, you say, is difficult. Well do I know it is difficult, and therefore I admonish you to give yourself with all your force to study; for when you are great in art, you will know no more difficulties.

VI.

In daily life I have always seen graceful men gain the advantage over severe men; for grace is an omnipotence,

conquering hearts. Be sure it is the same in art; acquire grace, and you will be happy; but take heed that, as the man who in society affects grace and has it not is disgraced, so the artist who too sedulously seeks it, instead of pleasing, annoys us. Hold thyself in the just medium. And this I say to you only in case you feel within yourself the native capacity for this graceful being; for, if you are cold as to this amiable dominion, seek it not; your case is desperate. Follow then art in its rigor, for severity has also its honor.

And the same temperance as in grace I would advise as to expression; that you be always self-poised and composed, showing moderation and serenity of mind. All violence is deformity. This temperance gave the palm to Raphael above all the imitators of beauty.

VII.

Sculpture is only one of various dialects, through which the eloquence of art expresses nature. It is a heroic dialect, like tragedy among the poetic dialects, and, as the terrible is the first element of the tragic, so is the nude first element in the dialect of sculpture. And as the terrible should in the tragic epopea be expressed with the utmost dignity, so the nude should in statuary be signified in the fairest and noblest forms.

Here art and letters agree as to the treatment of their subjects.

While invention and disposition keep close to nature and reason in elocution and execution, it is permitted and required to leave the vulgar ways of custom and seek an expression, great, sublime, composed of what is best both in nature and idea.

VIII.

Money is in no way more legitimately gained than through the fine arts, because men can do without these objects, and

are never forced by necessity to buy them. They are articles of luxury, and should leave no doubt of a free love in the buyer. Therefore, however great may be the price set upon a work of art, it can never be extravagant.

Rules and measurements, he observed to an artist, when just, are immutable for the artist who is not perfectly sure of himself, but a master sometimes shows the height of his intelligence by departing from them. For a great artist enjoys the liberty accorded by Aristotle, who says that, in some cases, we should prefer a false vraisemblance to an unpleasing truth.

The Niobe, for instance, is in wet drapery, and so are many other antique figures. This is not true; but if the artist had adhered to truth, he would have been traitor to his art by foolishly encumbering the forms; thus he preferred a falsity, which brought him a beautiful verisimilitude, since, through the wet and adhesive drapery, the artist could show the forms in the full excellence of art.

Even so, to mark the strength of Hercules, the Greek gave him a bull neck; to make the Apollo more light and majestic, altered the natural proportions.

This boldness does not show ignorance which transgresses rules, but science to discern the effect, and choose the point of view, which is born of philosophy in the judgment of the artist.

IX.

Observe how important it is that sculpture should be eminently beautiful, as most generally it must triumph by a single figure, convince and move by a single word; woe to it if this figure, this word be not excellent!

X.

You ought to know anatomy well, said he, to some pupils, but not to make others observe this, for, if it is true that art

should imitate nature, let us follow nature in this; for she does not draw attention to the anatomy, but covers it admirably, by a well-contrived veil of flesh and skin, presenting to the eyes only a gentle surface, which modulates and curves itself with ease over every projection.

XI.

Pity that nymph cannot speak, said an Englishman, or that Hebe should not spring forward; could but the miracle be worked here, as it was for Pygmalion, we should be perfectly content. You deceive yourself, said he; this would not give you pleasure. I do not expect by my works to deceive any one; it is obvious that they are marble, and mute and motionless; it suffices me if it be acknowledged that I have in part conquered the material by my art, and made an approach to truth. It is sufficient that, being seen to be of stone, the obstacles should excuse the defects. I aspire to no illusion.

Few artists have known how to explain their thoughts in writing. If they had there would have been many more feuds among them, and more time lost. Artists who wrote were always mediocre. It is necessary to work, not write. Woe also to those literati who constitute themselves judges of art; their absurdities will avenge those whom they misjudge.

XII.

They criticise the faults in my works, nor do I complain; such are inseparable from the works of a human being; but what does grieve me is, that they do not find there beauties enough to make them forget the faults. Yet, should fragments of my works be dug up and shown as antiques, these same persons, perhaps, would declare them excellent. Antiquity is privileged! Men are herein unjust, that they see only the beauties of the ancient, only the faults of the modern

artist. But I recollect to have read the same complaint in Tacitus!

XIII.

He was unwearied in retouching his works, saying, I seek in my material a certain spiritual element, which may serve it as a soul; imitation of forms is death to me. I would aid myself with intellect, and ennoble those forms by inspiration, that they might wear at least the semblance of life,—but it may not be.

XIV.

As to the Greeks, let us study their works, to learn their methods. Let us seek the way they took, to be at the same time so select and so true.

Speaking of what gives to works of the hand the beauty of the soul, if you examine, said he, the works of the ancients, I see that these workmen strove to put soul and spirit into looks and attitudes, rather than into vestments; but, if you look at modern works, you will find the life rather in the vestments than in the person. Thus with the ancients the clothes serve and are silent, but, in modern works, they become arrogant, and the figures remain imprisoned in the cold of the marble. This inverse way, I think, has been a principal cause of the degradation of art.

XV.

I do not like to make portraits, but prefer exercising my art in a larger way. When you have made a portrait with the best wisdom of an artist, comes the lover of the person and says, "You are far handsomer than that, I should not know it was meant for you;" here the true artist is oftentimes pulled to pieces, and one far beneath him commended.

Neither do I wish patiently to copy all the minutiæ of a countenance. Resemblance should be derived from the large and important parts, from choice of the leading traits. Now

I believe excellence of this kind is to be attained by seeing these parts in the historic method, and from the best point of view, so that the image may be at once like and grandiose, and may seem both true and beautiful, though the subject in nature may not be beautiful. And if it is true that the arts are the ministers to beauty, it is a crucifixion to distort them to copy vulgar subjects.

XVI.

Seeing that certain young painters had attained the style of the earliest masters, he said, it is well that these young men should begin in that simple and innocent style, which was the path taken by the greatest artists. But I hope they will know how to add to simplicity nobleness, and reach at last a boldness controlled by reason, inspired by genius, embellished by taste. For had art kept always within these limits of infancy, we should have had no Raphael, no Michael Angelo.

XVII.

Finding certain painters discouraged because art was represented to them as somewhat superhuman, he cheered them, saying, it makes young men too timid to persuade them, as they say Mengs did his pupils, that art is a mystery, and that none can be an artist, unless first he has been raised into Paradise, and sublimated by the most subtile ideas.

This celestial doctrine may be of use, perhaps, as to statuary; but as to painting, the excellent Venetian artists did wonders with a surprising naturalness, and with such ease that they seemed in sport.

Subtilties produce sophists only. Our old painters refined only in their works, contending only for the imitation of the true, the beautiful, of nature and human affections, and thus they produced classic works.

Good sense, an excellence which the Lord God has bestowed on but few, is all the metaphysics of our art, as I believe it may be of all things. This saying was ever in his mouth.*

XVIII.

A respectable cavalier, seeing Canova's Venus, fancied he must have had a divinely beautiful person for his model, and begged that he would show him one of these celestial forms. Accordingly a day was appointed, the nobleman came full of eagerness, but finding a person rather coarse than beautiful, was greatly surprised. The sculptor, who was intimate with him, said, smiling, perfect beauty would never be seen by the bodily eye, if unaided by the eyes of the soul, sharpened by the fair precepts of art, in which case we do not see the model as it is, but as it ought to be; and it will suffice to gain from the model an intimation of what is good. The study of the antique helps to sharpen and steady these eyes of the intellect, as do the study of select forms in nature, in the same way as the ancients, reasoning, culture of the tastes, and the heart.

When you shall thus have directed the visual virtue of the mind, set yourself to work, you will then overcome all difficulties, and produce beautiful works upon subjects which are not beautiful. This is what I would wish to do, and it pains me the more not to reach the goal, as I know well where it stands, but the eyes of the mind have not with me force enough to conquer matter, and thus I remain mortal as I am.

XIX.

About those masters who urge their pupils to adopt some

* He does not seem to have clearly seen that the good sense of genius is the equipoise of perfected faculties, and should be distinguished by the thinker from the good sense of common men, which expresses only the experience of past ages.

particular style, graceful or terrible, rigid or fleshy; principles, he said, are the same for all, because they are the fruit of common sense, but the peculiar disposition allots to each one in execution his distinctive character, and here the pupil should be left quite free. Just that temper of mind which mother nature has placed in the bosom ought to influence the work; nature should not be forced, neither must we fail to do her behests, since that is like prolonging or shortening the limbs for the bed of the famous tyrant. And if you urge nature into a path against her will, she will be sure to drive you back against your will.

XX.

As to execution, majestic lineaments alone are not sufficient for the grand style, since they may have a dryness in their majesty.

The majestic parts, happily concorded with the medium and the little to a broad and sublime whole, constitute the grand style.

XXI.

As to the old dispute, whether a preference is to be given to painting or sculpture, he showed pity and disdain for the idlers who lost in such contention the precious time that they might have given to work, and added, all this heat springs from the true point at issue never having been defined; that is to say, if we are thinking of invention, perhaps painting is more difficult, because more complicated than sculpture; even as music and perspective are more difficult as to invention than sculpture. Yet once ascertain the rules of music and perspective, and they become easy of execution, because they depend on fixed rules; which having once learned, the performer may proceed in safety without fatigue, and without any great intellect. Thus we see mere youths learn music by rule, and very ordinary artists perfectly acquainted with perspective,

so as to produce striking effect; yet none will allow the best scene painter as high rank as a very weak historical painter. The merit rests with the invention of the rules. Find, then, first the rules and regular disciplines of the painter, then compare his work with that of the sculptor, and see which is the most difficult.

'Tis certain that, all the rules of painting being known, the art has been made much easier. I know not that we can say as much for sculpture: we, indeed, see children amuse themselves with plaster, and making little figures, but they stand still at these beginnings.

XXII.

In one respect he thought painting had the advantage over sculpture, and this is in the folds of drapery. It is true, he said, that folks must always accommodate themselves to the motions of the person painted, especially to the form of the muscles; and the reason why they are so free and graceful in the works of Raphael, and of the ancient masters, is because they show distinctly the forms beneath them. This consideration is of equal importance to the painter and sculptor. But while the painter needs only to adapt his draperies to certain parts in his picture, because they are to be looked at only from a single point of view, and if they look well in front, it is no matter how they fall behind, the sculptor is obliged to arrange them with equal judgment behind and on every side. See how much the sculptor has to do, since he not only must adjust them with elegance to the movements of the person, but must show clearly where they begin, how they are extended, and where they ought to finish.

Let no one fancy that folds should all be of the same character. As the design of the human form varies with the character of each person, so ought the folds to vary according to the various characters of stuffs and of persons.

The treatment of folds presents difficulties even to the

greatest sculptors, because it is not with them as with the nude, where the data and principles are fixed in nature, and a careful study of these ensures success. But folds, oftentimes, depend on the occasion, or some accidental circumstance, and always on the taste, which differs with each man.

This study has no fixed rules; often the finest arrangement of folds comes from a happy combination seen on some person where it was the effect of accident. The best rule is to observe the momentary changes in the vestments of all persons whom we meet. Thus the life of the artist is a continued study; since he will often draw the highest benefit from observations made, while walking in the streets for his amusement.

XXIII.

Talking one day about following out the rules with exactness, he said it was well to do so, since this prevented arbitrary and capricious proceedings, keeping the artist awake to his duty; but that nevertheless, if he followed these rules in a servile spirit, the desired effect is not obtained, and, without effect, there cannot be the illusion so essential to art. A principal study among the ancients was how to obtain this effect, and to this they would sacrifice rules; this was no oversight, but highest wisdom; since if, by an exact observation of what has been prescribed, the desired effect is not obtained, the artist misses his aim, and blasphemes the rules.

I do not intend this counsel for the young, for they should not desire to emancipate themselves from the discipline of art, and with them the attempt to do so would be a fatal error; but I speak thus to the great masters with whom such infractions display the best knowledge of art, of experience, of philosophy.

The Colossi of Monte Cavallo, seen near at hand, have eyes exaggerated, and somewhat distorted, and the mouth does not follow exactly the line of the eye, and it is this very

thing which in the distance gives them so much expression. The Sibyls of Buonarrotti, which are of supreme excellence in painting, seen near, have frightful masses of shadow; the upper lip of a different impasto from the rest; yet, seen from the proper point of view, they are divine works. This it is to profess the skill of a master, but which is not to be attained, except by vast studies, and the practice given by great works.

XXIV.

Speaking of a young sculptor who had great disposition for art, but was hindered by a love of amusement, I pity, said he, those young men who think to make pleasures of all sorts harmonize with art. Art alone must reign in all the thoughts of the sculptor; for this alone must he live, to this alone devote his every care. Otherwise the intellect is dissipated, the body exhausted; and the sculptor has more need of his physical forces than any other artist. How can he who is wearied out with late hours, with music and dancing, with suppers, come early in the morning to work in the studio with that ardor which is needed? They grow indolent, and, with slothfulness, come indifference to glory and content with mediocrity.

XXV.

Enthusiasm is as much needed for the artist as the poet; yet, to restrain the fire of those who delight overmuch in fanciful and luxurious inventions, he would add, he who abandons himself to this alone, will produce nothing worthy. Enthusiasm must be united to two other grand qualities, else it differs little from delirium; only when regulated by reason, and adapted to execution, is it triumphant.

Three powers are to be satisfied in the spectator; the imagination, the reason, and the heart. Enthusiasm alone can, at best, only excite the imagination, which is the least noble, since madmen have it in great fulness. The reason can

be satisfied only with what is conformable to reason, and the heart, with the expressive execution which convinces the senses.

XXVI.

Let the sculptor fix his attention on the head; fine heads are rare, were so even among the ancients;—traverse the great museum of the Vatican, and you will observe a poverty as to this eminent part of the person.

In working, he finished the head first, saying, to work less ill I want to find pleasure in it, and what pleasure could I have in working on a person, whose physiognomy did not stir my blood; how endure to converse with it three or four months. I should do all against my heart; the first requisite is that I should be pleased, nay, charmed with my subject; then I shall work on it with loving care, for we are naturally inclined to show courtesy to the beautiful rather than the ugly. Beauty awakens a spontaneous, impetuous affection, though ugliness may be borne with through education, through reflection. But see two boys crying, one beautiful, the other ugly; it is the beautiful one you will find yourself impelled to console. I seek first an invention as good as may be, so that this may inspire and give me courage for the rest, and, seeing it beautiful, or beautiful to my mind, for I dare not speak positively as to its being so, I say within myself, the beautiful countenance ought to have all the other parts correspond with it, it ought to be in an attitude, dressed in robes worthy of its beauty; thus that first ray lights me to the rest. And this appears to me the true philosophy, founded on the human heart.

XXVII.

Hearing exaggerated praise of certain artists, who have sought out violent motions for their subjects; I do not love, said he, these vehement motions, which are contrary to the

sober and composed medium in which abides the beauty of all the imitative arts; to me also they seem easy, though the vulgar suppose them difficult, and I should rather exhibit that ease which artists know to be difficult.

'Sculpture is only marble, until it has motion and life; now let us set ourselves to work, and see if it is not more difficult to impart soul to a part gently moved, and in quiet, than to one moved for an act that aids it to the semblance of life.

XXVIII.

He was at work one day on the foot of a dancing nymph, and showed indefatigable patience in retouching it. Why do you give so much labor to these minutiæ? said a friend to him. Already this statue is a divine image. Do you expect those who are enchanted with its beauty to pause and examine these trifles? Diligence, he replied, is what gives honor to our work. I labor here upon the nails. Among the things which are ordinarily neglected in art are the human nails, and yet the ancients took great pains to express them well; in the Venus de Medici they are admirably well done. Not without deep wisdom is that proverbial expression of the ancients, "perfect even to the nails," to signify a complete work.

The ears too are often merely indicated, not finished out in detail; yet the shape of the ear has great influence on the human countenance, and we see them carefully executed in the best sculptures.

XXIX.

How is it that you can be so calm beneath bitter censure? The Artist replied, I ought to be more grateful to my critics, than to those who praise me, even though the critics are sarcastic and unjust. It is easy to be lulled to sleep in art; praise conduces to this drowsiness, while censure keeps the artist awake, and fills him with a holy fear, so that he dares

not abandon himself to license, to mannerism; it makes him eager to produce always better works. Plutarch says the unkind observation of enemies keeps us on our guard against errors; Antisthenes, that to plough a strait furrow, it needs to have true friends or violent enemies; since the enemy sees much which is concealed by affection from the friend.

XXX.

Take a great illustrious revenge on your calumniators, by seeking to do better, constrain them to silence by your excellence; this is the true road to triumph. If you take the other, if you plead your cause, justify yourself, or make reprisals, you open for yourself a store of woes, and you lose the tranquillity which you require for your works, and the time in disputing, which should have been consecrated to labor.

XXXI.

As I have shown in these memoirs, the virtue of Canova as a man was not unworthy his excellence as an artist. Artists, he said, are called Virtuosi; how then can they dare contradict by their actions the noble meaning of their art? The arts in themselves are divine; they are an emanation from the Supreme Beauty; they are one of the supports of Religion. If the artist has once fixed his mind on such great objects, I do not know how he can by his life disgrace this magnificent trust.

Beside, purity of heart, virginity of mind, have great influence on the artist, both as to dignity of conception, and means of execution. Artists paint themselves in their works. The courtesy, grace, benignity, disinterestedness, the enlarged and noble soul of Raphael, shine out marvellously in his works.

A portrait, said to be that of Correggio, was brought to Canova, when he wished to make his bust; but, as he saw there a coarse mind, with coarse features, he said, it cannot

be that the painter of the graces could have worn such a semblance. And he was right; it was not the true portrait of Correggio. Seeing afterwards the true portrait, lo! said he, here is the one who could paint beautiful things.

XXXII.

To one of the young men of his studio, who took offence at all nudity, who was scandalized at being set to work on the forms of men, if they were beautiful, and of women would not touch even the arms; he, disgusted by this absurd scrupulousness, said, I too abhor immodest works as I do sin, for an artist must in no way stain his honour; nor can vice ever be beautiful. Yet, since the nude is the language of art, it ought to be represented, but in a pure spirit. If you know not how to do this, if you have so base a mind as to bring the perversities of your own corruption into the discipline of the gentle arts, take some other path. Nudity is divine; bodies are the works of God himself; if he had not wished that any part should be as it is, he would not have made it so; all was at his will, of his omnipotence; we need not be ashamed to copy what he has made, but always in purity and with that veil of modesty, which indeed nature did not need in the innocence of first creation; but does so now in her perverted estate.

Licentiousness is not shown in the nudity of a form, but in the expression which a vicious artist knows how to throw into it; I think rather that the unveiled form, shown in purity, adorned with exquisite beauty, takes from us all mortal perturbations, and transports us to the primal state of blessed innocence; and still more that it comes to us as a thing spiritual, intellectual; exalting the mind to the contemplation of divine things, which, as they cannot be manifested to the senses in their spiritual being, only through the excellence of forms can be indicated, and kindle us by their eternal beauty, and draw us from the perishable things of earth.

Where is the being so depraved, who, seeing forms of ad-

mirable beauty in Greek art, would feel corrupt desires, and not rather find himself ennobled and refined by the sight, and abashed in its presence at his own imperfection? This is why a perfect beauty is named ideal, because it is wholly a thing of the soul and not of the sense.

Corrupt inclinations alone can lead to impure wishes at sight of a naked statue of exquisite beauty and of chaste expression; nor ought it to be believed, that the ancients, who revered virtue as a divinity, would so degrade the dignity of the mind as to indulge brutal desires, while they adored unveiled beauty.

XXXIII.

There is no heart so hard that it can resist grace, tempered by dignity.

XXXIV.

In reference to an artist of great aspiration but small success, because for many years he had pounded as in a mortar at art, without coming to any happy issue, he said, steadfast perseverance must bring some improvement: but, if nature has not herself launched us in the way we choose, perseverance alone will not avail.

If a young man does not dart forward with admirable progress, in the first three or four years, always provided he has the right principles, little, generally speaking, can be hoped from him afterwards. With time, he may, indeed, acquire more freedom in treatment, more knowledge of material, more learning, but not more originality, nor more development of genius.

The figure of Clemency, in the Ganganelli Mausoleum, was one of my earliest works; and I know not that, in the thirty years that intervene, I have learned to do better. I grieve to see my powers so circumscribed, and would wish to raise myself to a higher mark, but I do not succeed.

XXXV.

He entertained so modest an opinion of himself that he repeated often, such an one praises me, but am I certain that I deserve it? I do not accept this praise, lest I perhaps usurp what does not belong to me; beside, I am always expecting that some boy will come forward, who shall put me quite in the shade.

XXXVI.

Speaking of the artist's obligation to express the affections of the mind, he said, our great ancient artists were admirable in what relates to the affections; with the progress of years reason has gained, but the heart has lost; this is perhaps the cause of the prevalent indifference to works of art; they address themselves so much to the reason, that the senses are not moved, the heart remains cold, nor is excited to emotion, even by the most commended works.

XXXVII.

The artist, said he, laboring on the form, ought to fill it with modulations, which shall all be contained within the just limits of the outline of the whole; to this rule he added another drawn from observation of natural beauty, and of numerical proportions; that is, to work on all parts, regulating them constantly by the ternary correspondence. I mean, that each part, however small, must be composed of three parts; a greater, a lesser, and a least, so that they should coincide variously and insensibly to form that one part. This rule, he said, had led him to the resemblance of flesh, and to a truth in every part. This applies also to the arrangement of hair, the divisions of drapery; we must be guided in the execution of all by the scale of an invisible geometry.

XXXVIII.

Canova had applied a profound study to the comment made by Metastasio on the Poetics of Aristotle, and said he had learned more from this than from all the masters of art.

As poetic diction should be pure, lucid, elegant, dignified, even so the statuary should not make use of a coarse and porous stone, but of the finest and hardest marble. The poet ought to have a rich, elevated, and enchanting style, and the sculptor the same, if they would not fail of the highest truth.

Those are the rabble and the dregs amid painters, who, thinking the better to imitate nature, introduce into pictures on illustrious subjects the style of the taverns, and renounce the dignity of art, that is to say, its divine part, the ideal.

The sculptor must dispense entirely with ignoble, brutal forms; with him satyrs, Sileni, old people, and servants, if used, must each be ennobled by the beauty possible to its kind.

XXXIX.

Aristotle gives the degrees of imitation as three; better, worse, and like, I mean imitations of objects which are better or worse than or like ourselves. He thought this might well be applied to art, for being minister of virtue, of beauty, and the ideal it should always elevate its subject; those are scarcely endurable who represent it just as it is; those abominable who deform and degrade it, that is to say, make it worse.

XL.

From another opinion of Aristotle, that works of imitation please from the intimate feeling of complacence, which all have in their clear sightedness when they separate the true from the false, even in imitation; he inferred that those artists are unwise who wish rather to make manifest all parts

of their subject, than cause them to be divined. Those sculptors work against themselves, who, as it were, publish the anatomy, doing thus an injury to the self-love of the observer, who wishes to please himself with divining things, rather than see them inevitably.

XLI.

Aristotle says all men have an irresistible desire for imitation.

Canova judged this maxim to be founded in human nature, and justified by experience; hence he inferred, that there neither is nor can be a people without art; they may have it in an imperfect shape, but they will have it; thus artists have the great advantage of working on a foundation innate in nature, and are always sure to please, which is not the case with men of science, with philologists, to whose disciplines men have not so great a general tendency.

XLII.

Reading in the same that the poet is not obliged to observe historical fidelity, for the object of the historian is not to imitate, but only faithfully to recount events as they happened, and that of the poet to relate them as they might with verisimilitude have happened; he said, this is the law which, above every other, explains the beauty which is called ideal in art; since representing subjects not as they are, but as they ought to be, perfecting them and imparting to them that degree of nobleness, grace, excellence, of which they are capable, is to discern all their finest relations, and, by harmonizing these, form a type in our mind from the materials afforded by nature, and afterward verify it by the expression in art. Thus if the object of the imitation be, as is implied in the foregoing statement, to create a perfect type, those who are satisfied with a common or vulgar model, fail of their object and their art, and should rather

be called the disgrace of art, than artists. But those who are worthy its sublime disciplines, the true artists, are above the followers of other callings, however arduous, since others have permanent rules, independent of composition, which demands not only judgment, as all things do but taste, inspiration, memory, and even creative energy.

XLIII.

As Cicero teaches that to produce emotion is the triumph of the orator, so, he said, is the introduction of passion into his works the triumph of the artist, and in this regard he was pleased with the other admonition that the inventor, while ordering his scene, ought to imagine himself in the event and passions he wishes to represent, even so far as to act them out by gesture; it being very true that he who would move others must first be moved himself.

So when he was modelling, you might have seen that he was invested with the passions of his subject by the changes of his countenance, by tears, joyousness, and agitation all over his body.

XLIV.

As execution is to works of art what elocution is to poetry, he said, even as the latter should be clear and noble, and in style the best and best arranged which be used, so art should choose the finest faces, the noblest forms, the most graceful drapery; the manner at once most easy and most dignified, most distinguished and most natural.

XLV.

He availed himself of criticisms from the multitude, for, said he, a work should please not only the learned, but the vulgar; that is to say, all men according to their capacity should find there what may move, delight, and instruct them, as with the immortal poem of Tasso, which attracts the gondolier no less than the philosopher.

Thus he thought it well to exhibit his compositions before they were entirely finished; because, though the people cannot judge as to mastery in art, it can feel grace, approve truth, be penetrated by the effect, enchanted by beauty. The people is, ordinarily, less corrupt than any other judge; it is not biassed by rivalry in genius, nor bigotry of schools, nor confusion of useless, false, ill understood, and ill applied precepts; it does not wish to display erudition, nor malice against the moderns, masked by idolatry for the ancients, nor any other of the baneful affections of the human heart, such as are fomented, oftentimes produced by learning, which is not ruled and purified by wisdom. Apropos to this he told the story from Lucian, that when Phidias was making his Jupiter for the Eleans, happening to be behind the door, he heard the people talking about it; some found fault with this, some with that; when they were gone, Phidias retouched the parts in question, according to the opinion of the majority, for he did not hold lightly the opinion of so many people; thinking the many must see farther than one alone, even if that one be a Phidias.

XLVI.

Finally, said Canova, above all theory and attempt of human subtilty at division and metaphysics in matters of art, I esteem that remark in the same comment on Aristotle, that good judgment is the best rule, without which the best precepts are useless, or even pernicious.

Of all which opinions of Canova, I am the earnest champion; for with him I have read a hundred times those comments on Aristotle, and have felt for myself the application which he made of them to art, and have registered them in my memory, to write them afterwards in leaves, which, perhaps, will not perish.

Thus far Missirini, affectionate and faithful, if not bold

and strong as the old Vasari! Such should be the friend of genius, manly to esteem, womanly to sympathize in, its life.

Reserving for another occasion the notice of various traits, which illustrate the position of Canova as an artist, we must hasten to an outline of his life, which is beautiful through its simplicity and steadfastness of aim, amid many conflicting interests, at an epoch of great agitation and temptation.

He was born at Possagno, a little town in the Venetian territory, 1757; and died at Venice, 1822. It illustrates the generosity of the world-spirit in our age, that, not content with giving us Buonaparte and Byron, Beethoven and Goethe, it should finish out and raise to conspicuous station a representative of a class so wholly different, and, at first glance, it might seem, so unlikely to be contemporary with the three former. The Goethean constellation, indeed, disallowed no life; and, with all its aversion to "halfness," was propitious to limited natures like Canova, and no way so ardent for the artist, as not to appreciate the artizan.— For Canova, though in good measure the artist, was in highest perfection the artizan.

Though his life had no connexion with the great tendencies of his time, yet it has on that very account a certain grace and sweetness. Chosen as the sculptor of the Imperial Court, and highly favored by the Pope, he knew how to take his own path, and answer, in his own way, to all requisitions. His life was that of a gentleman and student; still and retired in the midst of convulsion, full and sweet in the midst of dread and anguish, it comes with a gentle and refreshing dignity to our thoughts. From princes and potentates he wished nothing but employment, and the honors they added had no importance in his eyes, though they were received with that courtesy and delicate propriety which marked all his acts, whether towards the high or low in the ranks of this world. To write in marble the best thoughts

of his mind; to remain a faithful son and intelligent lover of his native country, to keep days devoted to the worship of beauty, unspotted as the material in which he expressed it, to lavish on his kindred by birth or spirit all the outward rewards of his labor, choosing for himself frugality of body, plenteousness of soul,—such was the plan of Canova's life; one from which he could not be turned aside by any lure of ambition, or the sophistry of others about his duties. He never could be induced to assume responsibilities, for which he did not feel himself inwardly prepared; though, when duly called to face a crisis, he showed self-possession, independence, and firmness.

It was by his intercourse with Napoleon that his character was most tried, and here his attitude is very noble and attractive. He never defies the Emperor, but is equally sincere, energetic, and adroit in defending the rights he had at heart. It is pleasant to see the influence on Buonaparte, who, always imperious and sarcastic when braved in a vain or meddlesome temper, does full justice to that of Canova. Though he could not induce the sculptor to enter his service, either by marks of favor or glittering hopes, he was not angry, but on the contrary, attended to his recommendation by redressing the wrongs of Venice, and lending generous aid to the cause of art at Rome. In this, as in other instances, Napoleon showed that where he met a man of calm and high strain, he knew how to respect him; that if men were usually to him either tools or foes, it was not his fault only. The Dialogues between Napoleon and Canova are well worth translation, but would occupy too much space here. They show, like other records of the time, the want of strict human affinity between the conquering mind and those it met. Even when they can stand their ground, he seems to see them, seize their leading traits, but never make a concord with them. He never answers to Canova's thought, and it is impossible to judge whether the oft-repeated argument, that

the works of art, which had been taken from Italy, could never be seen to the same purpose elsewhere, because no longer connected with the objects and influences that taught how to look at them, made any impression on his mind. If it had, he might with advantage have followed up the thought in its universal significance.

But wherever he turned his life, it was like the fire to burn, and not like the light to illustrate and bless.

This was one fine era in Canova's existence. One no less so was when, after the abdication of Buonaparte, the Allied Powers took possession of Paris. Then, when partial restitution might be expected of the spoils which had been torn from the nations, by the now vanquished Lion, Rome redemanded the treasures of art, whose loss she had bemoaned in the very dust, the Niobe of nations, doubly bereft, since not only the temple of Jupiter Stator was overthrown, and his golden Victories dispersed among kingdoms, once her provinces, but the Apollo, emblem of the creative genius which had replaced the heroism of her youth, had been ravished from her. And she sent him, who of her children she deemed most favored by the God, to redemand him and his associate splendors.

The French would not do themselves the honor of a free acquiescence in this most just demand; the other powers were unwilling to interfere, with the exception of England, who, moved scarce less by respect for the envoy, than sense of the justice of the demand, interposed with such decision, that the Prince of Art was permitted to resume his inheritance. The Duke of Wellington, with a martial frankness and high sense of right, which nobly became him, declared his opinion, afterward published in the Journal des Debats, "that the allied powers should not yield to the wishes of the French King in this matter. That so to do would be *impolitic*, since they would thus lose the opportunity of giving France a great moral lesson."

Such views of policy might, indeed, convince that the victory of Waterloo came by ministry of Heaven. Had but the Holy Allies kept this thought holy!

England not only assisted Canova with an armed force to take away the objects he desired, but supplied a large sum to restore them to their native soil, and replace them on their former pedestals.

There is something in the conduct of this affair more like the splendid courtesy of chivalrous times, than the filching and pinching common both in court and city at this present time. The generosity of England, the delicacy of Canova, who took upon himself to leave with the French monarch many masterpieces, mindful rather of his feelings, and respect for his position, than of his injustice, (though this injustice was especially unpardonable, since having been long despoiled himself of all he called his own, readiness to restore their dues to others might have been expected at this crisis, even from a Bourbon,) the letters of the Pope and Cardinal Gonsalvi, overflowing no less with gratitude than affection, the Pope thanking Canova for having not only fulfilled his intentions but "understood his heart," (in the delicacy shown towards France,) the recognition on all sides of the honors due to the artist, the splendid rewards bestowed by the Papal court, which Canova employed wholly for the aid and encouragement of poor or young artists, all this reminds us rather of Fairy Queens, with boundless bounty for the worthy, boundless honor for the honorable, and self-denial alike admirable in rich and poor, rather than modern snuff-box times of St. James or the Tuilleries.

The third and last fair fact in Canova's life was the erection of the temple at Possagno, of which an account is given in the following extract, from the journal of a traveller:—

"At sunset, I found myself on the summit of a ridge of rocks; it was the last of the Alps. Before my feet stretched out the Venetian territory. Between the plain and the peak from which I contemplated it was a

beautiful oval valley, leaning on one side against the Alps, on the other elevated like a terrace above the plain, and protected against the sea breeze by a rampart of fertile hills. Directly below me lay a village scattered over the declivity in picturesque disorder. This poor hamlet is crowned with a vast and beautiful temple of marble, perfectly new, shining in virgin whiteness, and seated proudly on the mountain ridge. It had to me an air of personal existence. It seemed to contemplate Italy, unrolled before it like a map, and to command it.

"A man, who was cutting marble on the mountain side, told me that this church of pagan form was the work of Canova, and that the village below was Possagno, his birth-place. Canova, added the mountaineer, was the son of a stone-cutter, a poor workman like me.

"The valley of Possagno has the form of a cradle, and is in the proportion of the stature of the man who went out from it. It is worthy to have produced more than one genius; it is conceivable that the height of intellect should be easily developed in a country so beautiful and beneath so pure a heaven. The transparency of the waters, the richness of the soil, the force of vegetation, the beauty of the race in that part of the Alps, and the magnificence of the distant views which the valley commands on all sides, seem made to nourish the highest faculties of the soul, and to excite to the noblest ambition. This kind of terrestrial paradise, where intellectual youth can expand into the fulness of spring; this immense horizon, which seems to invite the steps and the thoughts of the future, are they not two principal conditions necessary to unfold a fair destiny?

"The life of Canova was fertile and generous as his native soil. Sincere and simple as a true mountaineer, he loved always with a tender predilection the village and poor dwelling where he was born. He had it embellished very modestly, and came there in autumn to rest from the labors of the year. He took pleasure at these times in drawing the Herculean forms of the men, and the truly Grecian heads of the young girls. The inhabitants of Possagno say with pride, that the principal models of the rich collection of Canova's works came from their valley. In fact, you need only pass through it, to meet at each step the type of that cold beauty which characterizes the statuary of the empire. The principal charm of these peasant women is precisely one which marble could not reproduce, the freshness of coloring and transparence of the skin. To them might without exaggeration be applied the eternal metaphor of lilies and roses. Their liquid eyes have an uncertain tint, at once green and blue, like the stone called Aqua-marine. Canova delighted in the *morbidezza* of their heavy and abundant locks of fair hair. He used to comb

them himself, before copying them, and to arrange their tresses after the various styles of the Greek marbles.

These girls generally possess that expression of sweetness and naïveté which, reproduced in fairer lineaments and more delicate forms, inspired Canova with his delightful head of Psyche. The men have a colossal head, prominent forehead, thick fair hair, eyes large, animated, and bold, and short square face. Without anything profound or delicate in their physiognomy, there is an expression of frankness and courage which reminds us of an ancient hunter.

"The temple of Canova is an exact copy of the Pantheon at Rome. The material is a beautiful marble, of a white ground, streaked with red,—but rather soft, and already marked by the frost.

"Canova caused the erection of this church with the benevolent object of presenting an attraction to strangers to visit Possagno, and thus giving a little commerce and prosperity to the poor inhabitants of the Mountain. It was his intention to make it a sort of museum for his works. Here were to be deposited the sacred subjects from his hand, and the upper galleries would have contained some of the profane subjects. He died, leaving his plan unfinished, and bequeathed a considerable sum for this object. But although his own brother, the Bishop of Canova, had it in charge to oversee the works, a sordid economy or signal bad faith presided over the execution of the last will of the Sculptor. With the exception of the marble *vaisseau*, which it was too late to speculate about, the necessary furnishings are all of the meanest kind. Instead of the twelve colossal marble statues, which were to have occupied the twelve niches of the cupola, you see twelve grotesque giants, executed by a painter, who, they say, knew well enough how to do better, but travestied his work to avenge himself of the sordid shifts of his employers. But few specimens of Canova's work adorn the interior of the monument; a few bas-reliefs of small size, but of pure and elegant design, are incrusted in the walls of the chapels.—There are copies also in the Academy of the Fine Arts at Venice, with one of which I was particularly struck. In the same place is the group of Christ at the Tomb, which is certainly the coldest invention of Canova—the bronze cast of this group is in the temple at Possagno, as well as the tomb which encloses the remains of the Sculptor. It is a Grecian Sarcophagus,—very simple and beautiful, executed after his designs.

"Another group, of Christ at the threshold, painted in oil, decorates the chief altar. Canova, the most modest of sculptors, had the ambition to be a painter also.—He retouched this picture from time to time during

several years,—happily the only offspring of his old age,—which affection for his virtues, and regard for his fame, ought to induce his heirs to keep concealed from every eye."

To this purpose he devoted the riches he had earned by his works. That he should, even with his celebrity, and at the end of so laborious a life, possess a fortune adequate to so vast an enterprise was, and is, a matter of wonder, and only to be explained by the severe simplicity of his habits. With deep regret we learn that he died too soon to ensure the fulfilment of his plan. A wish so pure deserved that he should find a worthy executor.

To sum up decisively, if not fully, Canova shines before us in an unblemished purity of morals, tenderness, and fidelity toward friends, generosity to rivals, gentleness to all men, a wise and modest estimate of himself, an unfailing adequacy to the occasion, adorned by fineness of breeding in all his acts and words.—He is no life-renewing fountain, but we will think of him with a well-assured pleasure, as a green island of pure waters, and graceful trees, in the midst of a dark and turbulent stream.

STATESMEN.

"Große Geiſter der Vorwelt herrſchen oft noch lange nach ihrem Tode fort über die künftigen Zeitalter, vermittelſt ſolcher, die Nichts für ſich, ſondern nur die Forſetzungen und Lebensverlängerungen von jenen ſind. Sehr oft iſt dies auch kein Unglück; nur ſoll derjenige, der das menſchliche Leben mit tieferem Blicke zu faſſen begehrt, wiſſen, daß unter ihnen die Zeit nicht fortgeht, ſondern ruht; — vielleicht um Kräfte für neue Schöpfungen zu gewinnen."

Fichte.

MACHIAVELLI.*

"Time's glory is
To unmask falsehood, and bring truth to light."

SHAKSPEARE.

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI was born at Florence, on the fifth of May, fourteen hundred and sixty-nine, of an ancient and noble family.† His father, Bernardo Machiavelli, traced back his ancestry to the middle of the ninth century, where it became mingled with the race of the ancient Marquesses of Tuscany. His mother was descended from the Counts of Borgo Nuovo of Fucecchio, whose name may be found in the annals of Tuscany, as early as the tenth century. The honor of both families had been supported by a long line of republican dignitaries, and a right to some employment in the service of

* *Opere di Niccolò Machiavelli, Cittadino e Segretario Florentino X. Vol.* Italia. 1826.

Machiavel, son génie et ses Erreurs, XI. Tom. Par A. F. ARTAUD. Paris. 1833.

† The greater part of Machiavelli's history is contained in his familiar letters and official despatches. The most voluminous of his biographers, M. Artaud, has been contented with translating or condensing them. But they still open a rich and noble field, which, with the additions and illustrations that careful research might derive from other sources, would yield an enviable harvest to the diligent historian.

the state, had became almost hereditary in them. It is probable that the attention of Niccolò, was also directed to a similar line of duty, and that his early habits and tastes were carefully formed for public life. But the meagre and indistinct records, that have been preserved of his youth, throw but a feeble light upon his early history; and all that can be gathered from his own writings, consists of a few brief allusions to his dependence and poverty.*

The disadvantages of this situation must have been compensated, in part, by the peculiar prosperity that was enjoyed at Florence, during the most important portion of this period. He was born in the last year of the mild administration of Piero de'Medici, and the various tumults and struggles, occasioned by the party, that sought to prevent the succession of Giuliano and Lorenzo, had terminated in the unsuccessful conspiracy of the "Pazzi," before he had completed his tenth year. The remainder of his youth was passed under the popular government of Lorenzo the Magnificent, one of those rare and brilliant epochs, in which the genius of the prince encourages the development of mind, while his power is still too feeble to allow him to restrict its freedom. Thus all the influence which can be attributed to a general and elevated taste for literature, when combined with the highest degree of mental activity, may be justly supposed to have acted upon the early character of Machiavelli, and to have concurred, with his natural disposition, in forming those prompt and energetic habits of thought, by which he was so much distinguished during the whole of his career. At the same time, the brilliant festivals and splendid games, with which Lorenzo endeavored to divert the active minds of his fellow-citizens, from too closely observing the course and tendencies of his government, cherished in Machiavelli the fondness for

* Nacqui povero, ed imparai primo a stentare che a godere. Lett. al Vettori. Opere, Vol. X. p. 99.

gayer amusements, which served, in his graver years, as a relaxation from public duty, and, during the cloudy decline of life, consoled and cheered the weary moments of languid inaction.

But the first years of his manhood were hardly passed, when the death of Lorenzo de'Medici, at the most critical moment of his country's fortunes, again exposed Florence as a prey to internal jealousies, and an aim for foreign ambition. The noble qualities of Lorenzo were soon forgotten under the puerile administration of his son, and even the wisdom and judgment which had given solidity to his own power, contributed, by contrast, to diminish the authority of his imprudent successor. The rapid invasion of Charles VIII., with the long continued woes, that it drew down, not only upon the devoted object of his ambition, but upon the whole of Italy, and the promptitude with which the Florentines seized this occasion of throwing off their wearisome yoke; the timid and vacillating conduct of Piero de'Medici; his cowardly abandonment of the interest and dignity of his country, are facts with which every reader of Italian history is familiar. If our readers, therefore, will carry back their minds to the state of Florence, at this period, both in its internal and its external relations, they will readily perceive that Machiavelli could not have commenced his political career, at a moment that imposed more arduous duties, or required a greater share of energy and skill.*

His first essay in political life, was made under the direction of Marcello di Virgillio, about the year 1494: but the commencement of his active career must be carried forward nearly five years, to the 19th of June, 1498. This is the

* A satisfactory account of Florence from this period untill the death of Machiavelli, may be found in Pignotti, Storia della Toscana, Lib. V, or in Guicciardini, though with more detail of the general history of Italy. Of the Florentine historians of this period, Nardi is the most esteemed.

date of his first public employment, and some idea may be formed, either of his popularity or of his promise, from the circumstance of his having been chosen from among four competitors, to the office of Chancellor of the second Chancery of the Signoria. During the course of the following month, he received from the "Ten of Liberty and Peace," the appointment which has preserved for him, with posterity, the title of "Secretary of the Florentine Republic."

He seems to have considered this office as a school of practical politics. The intimate relations that subsisted between Florence and the principal powers of Europe required in this government a greater degree of activity than we should be prepared to expect from so small a state, and gave rise also to many delicate questions that called for the greatest prudence and sagacity in all those to whom the arrangement of them was entrusted. Machiavelli was employed on many of these occasions,* and the rapid development of his political genius may be easily traced in his extensive correspondence with the heads of his government. The

* He was employed in twenty-three foreign embassies, among which were four to the court of France, and two to the Emperor. In addition to these duties, he was charged, on various occasions, with private missions within the state, and others of still greater importance to the armies of the republic.

No part of Machiavelli's political career has given rise to so much misrepresentation, as his embassy to the Duke Valentino, on the occasion of his rupture with Vitellozzo, Oliverotto and the Orsini. The reader who confines his examination of this period to the narrations of Roscoe and some other modern historians, will be led to concur in the darkest views of the character of Machiavelli. An attentive perusal of the original documents, will lead to a very different conclusion. The perilous situation of the Florentine republic exerted, at this moment, a peculiar influence upon her politics; and the friendship of Borgia and of Alexander, instead of forming a question of general interest or of probable advantage, could easily decide the destruction or preservation of the state. It was under

numerous letters of which it is composed, may be justly classed among the most instructive portions of his writings. Embracing an extensive range of topics, and prepared in various and widely different situations, they are marked with all the peculiarities which distinguished the character of the author. His political judgment seems gradually to extend

such circumstances that Machiavelli was despatched to the court of Borgia. The history of his embassy is fully detailed in his official correspondence; but the master-piece of treachery, by which Borgia secured his vengeance upon greater villains than himself, is also related in a separate letter, which originally either formed a part of the despatches, or was prepared, like the other historical fragments, to be interwoven in the continuation of the Florentine Histories. That Machiavelli, far from assisting to devise the treachery of Borgia, had no knowledge of his intentions with regard to Vitellozzo and his associates, is evident from the whole course of his letters. It appears from these, that the Duke never confided his plans even to his favorite counsellors: that his probable conduct was, on this occasion, a subject of general conjecture: Machiavelli gives his own, and inclines to suspect the seeming reconcilintion of Borgia and his enemies. It appears also that Borgia, instead of seeking the advice of Machiavelli, never admitted him to an audience except when new dispatches from Florence rendered it impossible to refuse, and the conversation at these interviews is fully related. V. the Leg. al Duca Valent, particularly from the letter of the 23rd of October, to the end of the Legation,

They who blame him for not having returned immediately upon the discovery of Borgia's crime, apart from the new principle which they establish for ambassadors, fall into two errors: they forget that he had repeatedly solicited a recall, and been ordered to remain,—V. pp. 189. 192. 231, of Leg. al D. Val. Opp. Vol. VIII; secondly, that the state of roads and country rendered all passing difficult and dangerous,—some of his own despatches were lost,—pp. 274, 286. There was no possibility of his escaping to Florence. For general accounts, v. Guicciard. Vol. III. p. 78, ed. of Pisa, 1819. The note at the bottom should be compared with Roscoe, Leo X., V. I, pp. 446, 454. Every sincere admirer of Roscoe,—and we are proud to be classed in the number,—must regret the facility with which, in all that relates to Machiavelli, he has abandoned his usual course of careful thought and original investigation.

Ginguené's observations should be compared with his own embassy at Turin.—V. Botta Storia d'Italia, del 1789, Lib. XV.

from simple and faithful description, to skilful details and sagacious conjectures. As he advances in the practice of his duties, his descriptions acquire greater force, and we meet from time to time, brief and powerful generalizations, that discover the increasing vigor and range of his thought. Circumstances, events, characters, assume a new life under his pen, and the scenes and interests of the age, with all the doubts and hopes and anxious conjectures, which agitated hearts that have long been cold, seem to return like the cares and feelings of the present. It was in the exercise of these, more, perhaps, than in that of any of his other duties, that he acquired the art of selecting from the mass of mingled events, the particular facts that gave form and feature to history.

The confidence and favor, with which Machiavelli was viewed by his government, are evident from the free recourse that was had to his services upon all important occasions. Scarcely was he returned from one embassy, when he was directed to prepare for another, and the most important negotiations with foreign powers were followed by difficult and confidential commissions within the territories of the republic. During the whole course of his public life, his duties required a constant state of activity and preparation, that would have exhausted the energies of any common mind. It was only while within the walls of Florence, that his situation seems to have been ill adapted to his character. But even there he found a compensation, and the familiar knowledge that he acquired of the nature and relations of the government, and of its adaption to the character of the people prepared his mind for the clear and vigorous views of the Florentine histories. Society, also, had many charms for his hours of occasional leisure, and poetry, "filled up each languid pause with the finer joys" of a rich and classic imagination.

In this succession of active duties, fourteen years of his

life passed rapidly away; and although he never advanced so far as to acquire any direct share in the conduct of the public councils, his sagacity and judgment were constantly employed in all important emergencies and difficult negotiations. But at length, a new storm began to gather above the devoted walls of Florence, and the timid and vacillating policy of a single chief,* again drew down upon his country and himself the ruin that firmness and energy might have easily averted. The government, by which Machiavelli had been employed, was overthrown by the arms of Spain, and the family of the Medici, like the Bourbons of our own days, returned to their native walls, under the protection of a foreign ally. . .

No sooner was the new government firmly established, than it commenced the usual train of persecutions against the partizans of the old. Three decrees were passed against Machiavelli, within the course of ten days. By the two first he was deprived of office, and condemned to a year's banishment from the Florentine territory: but the third, as if proceeding upon maturer deliberation, or procured under the influence of more friendly feelings, exchanged the sentence of banishment to a simple prohibition from entering the "Public Palace." Fear and suspicion followed the secretary into his retirement, and his faithful adherence to the republic was considered as a proof of hatred against her new rulers. Notwithstanding his thorough knowledge of the character of his enemies, he knew not how to adapt himself to his change of situation. He had studied the movements of government too long, to withdraw his eyes at once from this favorite subject of contemplation; and he continued his observations with the same boldness and freedom that he had indulged during his own public career.† The jealous apprehensions

* Piero Soderini, who had been made Gonfaloniere for life.

† Even after his imprisonment, he writes thus to his friend, Francesco Vettori: Pure se io vi potessi parlare, non potrei fare che io non vi

of government, which a more guarded line of conduct might have easily allayed, were strengthened by this ill-timed and imprudent boldness; and when, in the course of the following year, an extensive conspiracy was accidentally discovered, he was immediately arrested as a fitting object of suspicion. The torture was, at that period, indiscriminately employed in all cases of arrest; and the conviction, that a free and open course of justice would have failed to procure, was often wrung from the agonized confessions of an innocent victim. Six* shocks of the cord were inflicted upon Machiavelli with fruitless cruelty, and not a word escaped him in the bitterness of his agony, that could be wrested into a confession of guilt, or serve as an accusation against others. Unable to convict him, they could still torment; and accordingly, buried in the depths of a loathsome dungeon, his lacerated body closely bound with chains, and his mind distracted by the cries of misery and of degradation that reached him from every side, he was left to the long torture of solitude and suspense. Here, also, his fortitude remained unshaken, and his noble power of patient endurance baffled the snares of his adversaries, and wearied their malignity. Even the sonnets which he addressed to Giuliano de Medici, for the avowed purpose of exciting his interest, breathe an elevated and independent tone, and contain a degree of humorous expostulation and description, which could not have proceeded from a mind broken or humbled by misfortune. The friends whose affection he had gained, during the days of his prosperity, gave, in these moments of trial, the surest testimony to his worth and their own sincerity; and several lucky circumstances combining to favor their exertions, he was

empiessi il capo di castellucci, perchè la fortuna ha fatto che non sapendo ragionare nè dell'arte della seta, nè dell'arte della lana, nè de' guadagni, nè della perdite, e mi conviene ragionare dello stato, e mi bisogna botarmi di far cheto, o ragionar di questo.—Opp. Vol. X, p. 102.

Con sei tratti di fune in sulle spalle, &c. Sonn. a Giuliano de' Medici.

restored to freedom, after a short but rigorous confinement.*

It was not, however, to return to his favorite occupations, that Machiavelli issued from his dungeon A long course of bitter trial still awaited him; poverty, with its anxious schemes and depressing cares, the excitements of hope, the bitterness of repeated disappointment, and, more than all, the restless movements of a mind that nature had formed for constant exertion, and long habit had rendered incapable of repose. But the resources that his fortune denied, were, in part, supplied by his own exertions. Anxious to open a way of return to public life, on which he depended not only for enjoyment, but for the means of support, he composed and presented to Lorenzo de'Medici, the "Treatise of the Prince," in which he had endeavored to embody the results of his observations upon the governments of his own times, and of his study of the political doctrines of the ancients. † The

* It will not be uninteresting to observe the manner in which Machiavelli speaks of these events, for it shews, both how he prized his Roman fortitude, and that the simplicity with which he relates the remarkable events of history, was a part of his character.

To F. Vettori, he writes: Io sono uscito di prigione con letizia universale di questa città. Nè vi replicherò la lunga istoria di questa mia disgrazia; ma vi dirò solo che la sorte ha fatto ogni cosa per farmi questa ingiuria, pure per grazia di Dio ella è passata. Spero non c'incorrere più, si perchè sarò più cauto, si perchè i tempi saranno più liberali e non tanto sospettosi.—Opp. Vol. X, p. 97. In another letter: E quanto al volgere il viso alla fortuna, voglio che abbiate di questi miei affaro questo piacere che gli ho portati tanto francamente che io stesso mene voglio bene e parmi essere da più che non credetti,—p. 99. To a friend who complained of his long silence: A che ti respondo, che io ho avuto dopo la tua partita tante brighe che non è maraviglia che io non ti abbia scritto anzi è piuttosto miracolo che io sia vivo, perchè mi è suto tolto l'ufizio e sono stato per perdere la vita, la quale Idio e l'innocenza mia mi ha salvata tutti gli altri mali e di prigione ed'altro ho sopportato, pure io sto con la grazia di Dio bene e mi vengo vivendo come io posso, &c.—p, 121, ubi sup.

† This long-disputed fact is placed beyond all doubt by a letter to F.

object for which he had written failed, but a nobler end was obtained. He had commenced the train of thought, which was to lead him to the discovery of so many important truths, and his active mind could not rest on the threshold of the temple it had opened. Step by step he was led on to a more attentive examination of his principles, new truths were discovered, some erroneous views were brought out in their true light by wider application and more exact comparison, and the undertaking which had originated in a strong desire for public life, became the chief source of his enjoyments, and was continued with regular and progressive improvement until the last moment of his existence.

These studies, however, were not sufficient to furnish constant occupation for a spirit like his, and the intervals of severe labor were partly filled up with the composition of his comedies, his translations, and various lighter pieces, both in prose and in verse. But many moments still remained, which for a mind that sought relief in a variation of duties, rather than in actual repose, were wearisome blanks in existence. In such moments his spirit seemed to break, and his fortitude to forsake him, and it is impossible to read his expressions of passionate discontent, *—complaints that had never been suffered to escape him in prison and in torture,—without feeling how much easier it is to meet the most violent persecutions of the world, than to support the long trial of ingratitude and neglect.

At length, the gradual progress of his literary reputation began to prepare the way for a return to public life. His correspondence with Vittori, the Florentine ambassador at Rome, had been communicated to Leo X., and that Pontiff, a liberal if not a judicious patron of learning, had, from time

Vettori, which was unknown to the early editors.—V. Op. V. X, p. 149. It is also published in Pignotti, Stor. della Tosc. V. Vol. p. 269. In all but the latest editions of Machiavelli, it is wanting.

See, for example, pp. 171, 196, Vol. X.

to time, encouraged the solitary labors of Machiavelli, by various marks of his favor and his regard. He caused him to be consulted upon many important questions, and drew from him, through the medium of Vettori, many admirable views concerning the most interesting events of the period. At last, throwing aside the veil under which he had covered his communications with Machiavelli, the Pope invited him to prepare a plan for the government of Florence. This was shortly followed by a mission,* of but little moment in itself, but of great importance to him, as an earnest of a recall to his favorite occupations. But another blow seemed to await him at the first revival of his hopes, and before any fixed establishment had assured him of the permanence of his restoration to favor, Leo X. was suddenly cut off in the prime of his career. Thus deprived of a protector, who, although slow to grant him confidence, had been ready to acknowledge his merit, Machiavelli remained for a short time in the greatest uncertainty. Another mission, however, of a more important nature, was soon confided to him by one of the principal corporations of the city, and while engaged at Venice in the negotiations for its fulfilment, he received the welcome tidings that his name had been inserted among those of the citizens that were held eligible to office.

The successor of Leo did not long continue to enjoy his dignity; and upon his death, the Cardinal de Medici was elevated to the papal chair, with the title of Clement VII. In him Machiavelli found a firm and constant protector, and the most important portion of his political career now opened before him. The experience of his early life had been matured by a long course of study, and he returned to the field of his youthful exploits, with a skill perfected by assiduous labor, and an influence strengthened and extended by

* His correspondence with Guicciardini, during this mission, presents a very amusing picture of these grave historians. V. M. Op. Vol. X, pp. 199, to 207, inclusive.

the splendor of his literary reputation.* It is not without regret that we pass over the details of this period; for the profound judgment, the quick perception, the thorough knowledge of human nature, which distinguish the character of Machiavelli, appear in his later negotiations united with an unvarying boldness of purpose and energy of mind, which shew how well he was formed by nature to govern the mighty movements, which fortune had condemned him simply to contemplate and record. Melancholy, however, was the scene on which he was employed: war and unbridled barbarity without, the horrors of a destructive pestilence, with terror and contention within. But the fulness of these calamities was hidden from his view, and before the half of his dark anticipations had been realized, he sunk a prey to the united efforts of disease, exhaustion, and grief, on the 22d of June, 1527.

None of the works of Machiavelli were printed during his life; but the copies which had been prepared for the use of his friends, or of the patrons to whom particular portions were dedicated, had been freely circulated in manuscript both in Florence and in Rome. Within a few years, however, after his death, all his larger works were printed, and obtaining extensive circulation, soon gave rise to that violent controversy which has been continued, with very little increase of judgment, or diminution of virulence, during the course of three centuries.† The first to commence this warfare against the supposed doctrines of Machiavelli, was the celebrated Cardinal Pole, who, in his conversation and in his writings, assailed with great vehemence the principles of the "Prince."

* —— Che vedi quanto onore fa a me un poco di virtù che io ho. Lett. al figlio. Op. Vol. X. p. 257.

† A very able sketch of this controversy may be found in the learned preface to the edition of Machiavelli, to which we have referred above. A full and satisfactory history is given in the second volume of Artaud, p. 287, and seq.

This attack was followed, in a few years, by a violent dissertation of the Bishop Caterino Politi. A French protestant, Innocent Gentiletto, next entered the lists, and undertook, in an extensive Latin treatise, to refute one by one the obnoxious doctrines. The warfare, thus commenced, was continued with a virulence of which it is difficult to find the parallel; and men of every class and of opposite principles, princes and their subjects, statesmen and theologians, the blindest partizans of absolute power and the most enthusiastic champions of freedom of opinion, have united in the reproach, and confirmed the condemnation.

Amid the violence of controversy there is little room for the cool decisions of judgment. The contest for truth can hardly be carried on without awakening the pride of human reason; and no sooner does this feeling become excited on either side, than the antagonists, like foes, at the decisive moment of battle, lose every other sentiment in the eager desire of success. Thus, in the Machiavellian controversy, what was first advanced as a sincere opinion, was at last maintained as a point of character. Each successive writer readily adopted the assertions of his party, and enlarged them with comments and deductions of his own. Detached sentences, idle rumors, the vile inventions of party spirit, usurped the place of historical documents, until the mass of falsehood and calumny became accumulated to a degree that almost baffled the honest exertions of patient research.

It was impossible, however, that some should not be found among the higher intellects of every age, who were able to understand and appreciate the genius of Machiavelli. By some, many of his views have been silently adopted, without any acknowledgment of the source from which they were drawn; others have been contented with a passing comment, while a few have boldly advanced into the arena, and warmly engaged in the defence both of his writings and of his character. But unfortunately for the success of these last,

they seem to have thought it necessary for his vindication, that some mystic reason should be assigned for the composition of the Prince, and have thus been led to form contradictory and improbable theories, which they have supported with all the force of argument and the zeal of controversy. Some have discovered in the Prince a bold and faithful picture of a tyrant, prepared, not to guide the steps of a monarch, but to enlighten the minds of his subjects.* To others it has seemed a cunning and deep laid snare, coolly formed for the destruction of the Medici. While a few, struck with the evident discordance between some parts of the Prince and the other works of Machiavelli, and exaggerating the satirical cast of particular portions of his writings, have supposed him to have been a disappointed spirit, whose pictures of life were shaded with the darkness of his own misanthropy.

All these opinions seem equally extravagant, and have, indeed, little foundation either in the character of Machiavelli, or in the common principles of human nature. A picture prepared for the people, would hardly have been consigned to the custody of a single individual, and least of all to that of him who would have the most to apprehend from its publicity. A long life devoted to some single and distant object, with views extending into futurity,—toils and snares, prepared to act at some far off and uncertain period,—these may be found more easily in the dreams of romance than in the sober annals of actual history. The last theory,—the supposition that his works contain a satirical picture of life,—although grounded by its advocates upon his character and the cast of some of his writings, is fully refuted by the general features of both. Rarely, indeed, will it be found, that skilful and subtle theories can be applied to the motives of human action.

* Rousseau,—Cont. Soc. Œuv. Tom. V. p. 204. D'Alembert seems to have thought the same form of apology necessary, in order to explain some parts of the Spirit of Laws, Vol. Anal. de l'Esp. des Lois pour servir de suite à l'éloge de Mons. de Montesq. Œuv. Tom. I. p. 104.

But, at last, the moment arrived which was to furnish a surer guide to his real views, and the defence was to proceed from the best interpreter of the feelings and motives of every man,—his own correspondence. The diligence and zeal which have always characterized the scholars of Italy, had never been directed to an examination of the manuscripts of Machiavelli, and, as if the ingratitude that embittered his life had not sufficed, the only pieces which could afford a full refutation of the calumnies of his enemies, were suffered to moulder in neglect, while dusty *codices*, and even whole libraries, were searched to discover a new reading, or establish a disputed passage in the Decameron. The first of his inedited essays that was brought to light, was a small dialogue upon the Italian language, which was published by Giovanni Bottari, in 1730. After an interval of thirty years, the discourse addressed to Leo X. upon the government of Florence, with several letters of great interest and importance, were discovered in the Gaddian library, and published in the city of Lucca. Other discoveries soon followed, and shortly after the publications at Lucca, his official despatches to the Florentine government were recovered, and his important services as a faithful and confidential ambassador of the Republic, were, for the first time, established upon full and incontrovertible documents. These writings, so important to the character of their author, and so interesting in a country where literary curiosity is carried to an extent that can hardly be conceived in America, excited the attention of the Florentine literati to the highest degree, and gave rise to a careful preparation of a new edition of his works. This was partly accomplished in 1782; but new discoveries in the following years led to a more exact collection by the same editors, and it was not until the commencement of the present century, that the presses of Italy began to multiply fuller and more correct editions of the works of their greatest philosopher.

Nothing could be more striking than the new aspect in

which Machiavelli now appeared; the dark coloring with which calumny had surrounded him, has passed away; he comes before us as the dignified and faithful ambassador of his country, the innocent and unbending victim of arbitrary power, the versatile genius, who, by the energies of his own mind, reopened the path, which an unrelenting destiny had closed before him. We seem to have met with some familiar friend, who brings us into the privacy of his domestic life, and while he amuses our curiosity with characteristic anecdotes, discovers at every step the excellence of his heart and the fervor of his affections.

But one of the most important consequences which result from these discoveries, is the view which they give of the writings of Machiavelli, as a series of connected studies, and of principles progressively formed, illustrated and corrected.* Conjecture and theory concerning the motives which guided him are thus rendered comparatively useless, and the question becomes reduced to a simple examination of the final principles in which all his labors were terminated. The Prince then resumes its place as the earliest and most imperfect result of his studies, while the Discourses and Florentine Histories, in which he has retracted the greater part of what was false in the Prince, become the true standards of his character and of his principles. For, if what has once seemed truth, may be rejected by deeper and maturer thought, and the memory be freed from the stain which the promulgation of error has left behind; if the mind, when reposing on the higher places of the temple, may look back upon the pathway, which it has trodden in its upward progress, and correct the false and erroneous views, which it formed, while its vision was bounded by mists and obscured by darkness, then is it from his ultimate conclusions alone, that the character and principles of a writer should be judged.

* Artaud has been the first to perceive this connection.

A full justification, therefore, of the character of Machiavelli would require an extensive examination and accurate analysis of all his writings. The limits, however, of the present article will only admit of an imperfect sketch of his three principal works.

The first in order of time, is the treatise, which commentators and editors have distinguished by the improper title of the Prince, but which was indiscriminately called by its author, *A Treatise of monarchical governments,—of Princes,* or simply *of the Prince.** His object in this treatise, was to describe the nature and resources of some of the common forms of absolute monarchy, in the same manner in which he afterwards described in the Discourses the character of republican governments. The commencement of the work shows with sufficient precision, the point of view under which he proposed to consider his subject.

He divides monarchies into different classes, according to the nature of their origin. Some are hereditary,—others the fruit of conquest. Here, also, we find a new division, for the conquered territory may be an addition to an original patrimony, or it may be the first step of an ambitious leader towards absolute power. In every case, the conquest is the effect either of arms, of fortune, or of individual talent, as the people over whom it is made have been accustomed to a free or to a monarchical government.

From these original distinctions arise peculiar relations between the prince and the subject, which, in turn, require from the prince peculiar modes of government, varying in difficulty according to the origin of his power.

Having thus explained the ground of his classification, he enters into a full examination of the distinctions that he has

* Disputes concerning titles are seldom worthy of much attention,—but the editors seem, in this instance, to have adopted the title which favored most the idea so strongly supported by some, that this work was designed as a model for tyrants. Vide Artaud.

made; he explains the nature and degree of the difficulties against which princes have to contend, in each situation; he shows how they may be avoided, or in what manner they may best be overcome, and illustrates his observations by clear and animated sketches, from ancient and modern history.

He next examines with equal fulness of detail, the modes of offence and defence, which are common to these different forms of government. He, here, first assumes as an undeniable truth, that good laws and good arms are the principal foundations of every state, and then proceeding to explain the nature of the different kinds of troops, he describes in powerful language the destruction that inevitably follows all reliance upon mercenary or auxiliary power. Few men of the present day will deny the justness of his conclusions, or refuse their admiration to the warmth with which he traces the destructive progress of the power of the *condottieri*, and the abandonment of a citizen soldiery; but every reader that is familiar with the military history of Italy, will perceive that in these chapters, Machiavelli was contending against one of the strongest prejudices of his age.

The remainder of the work, with the exception of a few pages, is devoted to an examination of some of the personal qualities of a prince. True morality will unhesitatingly condemn two of the principles that he admits,—dissimulation and a disregard of faith, when its observance is opposed to the true interests of the state; but the practice of every government, not only in ancient but in modern times, and even in our own golden period of moral profession, presents a striking commentary upon the text of Machiavelli. Most of the other principles of these chapters are above all reproach. A prince should be economical, for economy not only contributes to his means of success, but preserves him from the necessity of becoming the oppressor of his subjects. He should be severely just, for although rigid justice is often mistaken for cruelty, it is still the surest path to mercy. If compelled to choose be-

tween the fear and the love of his subjects, he should guard against their hatred, by a cautious observance of their rights, and by never departing from the laws of the strictest justice; but, in all cases, he should constantly remember, that the love of the people is the only protection of the ruler. He should preserve respect for religion, should cultivate boldness and decision of character,—should studiously avoid the corruptions of flattery, and labor to secure the free advice of wise and experienced counsellors. Enterprise and industry should be encouraged; the development of genius should be promoted by a wise distribution of rewards and privileges; and, finally, by the institution of public festivals and games, the ruler should endeavor to diffuse throughout his dominions, a spirit of gaiety and contentment.

The Discourses on the first Decade of Livy, which followed the composition of the Prince, after the interval of a year, were written, partly in order to develop the author's views concerning some principles of republican government, and partly in compliance with the request of his friends, Buondelmonti and Buccellai, in the latter of whose gardens they are said to have been recited to the young men of Florence. They are divided into three books, with a subdivision of chapters. In each book, the most interesting events of the first Decade are considered under a particular point of view. The first book is devoted to an examination of the domestic government of Rome; the second, to that of the means by which the power of the republic was extended and preserved without the city; while the third passes in review, one by one, particular actions of private individuals, in order to examine their influence upon the progress of power, and upon the moral character of the nation. In each chapter of these books some fact of the first Decade is treated with more or less fulness of detail, according to the degree of its importance, and in most of them the author endeavors to arrive at some general principle for the government of his own times. The most important

of these principles are supported by parallel facts of contemporaneous history; and throughout the whole work, he labors to prove that the revolutions of power in every age have depended upon causes which were similar in themselves, although variously modified by circumstances peculiar to the nation or the period. His deductions are, in most cases, strictly logical, and the conduct and development of his arguments, clear, rapid and strong. New ideas arise at every instant under his pen, and he scatters over the mind, as he advances, the seeds of vigorous and active thought. The reader, whose study of legislation has been confined to the works of later philosophers, will be surprised to meet in the discourses many principles and observations, the acuteness and profundity of which, he has been accustomed to admire in the more pretending pages of his modern oracles.* The extent and variety of the subject naturally lead to a review of some of the doctrines of the Prince, and a careful comparison of both works will show how far the views of the author had changed, concerning some of the principles that debase the former. A few, but a very few, were too deeply rooted in the character, —might we not say, in the necessities of the age?

In neither, however, of these works, does Machiavelli attempt to give a full treatise of legislation. They contain important developments of particular principles, which he possessed neither the leisure nor the means to combine, and by filling up the vacant spaces, and nicely adjusting the separate parts, to form into a complete and regular system. Such a work would undoubtedly have given a different character to his earlier writings, and secured him, in part, from the deep obloquy under which his name has so unjustly lain. But it cannot be supposed that a perfect system of legislation could have been formed even by the noblest genius of such

* Historians also have found this a convenient foraging ground, and more than one modern classic shines in the plumage of Machiavelli.

an age.* The progress of society, the development of civilization in the sixteenth century, afforded not the facts upon which such a system could be founded. The principles of constitutional monarchy, the great laws of individual right, were unknown. The government of France, so highly commended by some writers of that period, was little better than a division of arbitrary power, in which the interests of the many were sacrificed to the caprices of the few. The constitution of England was slowly forming amid the jealousies and struggles of contending parties; but what contemporaneous eye could discern, in the shapeless fragments of the sixteenth century, the beautiful fabric which became the admiration and envy of the eighteenth! Political truths are the results of the study and analysis of past events; every age contributes, more or less, to the collection, in proportion to the degree of its advancement in civilization; constitutional monarchy was the legacy of the seventeenth century; constitutional republics, on the broadest scale, were the discovery of the eighteenth; political economy, the doctrines of criminal law, are daily advancing toward perfection, and who can tell what seeds of unknown truth are ripening with them, amid the comparative peace and tranquillity of our own age? It was no greater step in France, from the iron sceptre of Lewis the Great, to the constitutional throne of Lewis Philip, than from the present state of political science, to some degree of perfection that we know not of. Where, then, will be the vaunted systems of our own days? Where the discoveries of our philosophy? Mingled with the mass of earlier systems, where each, divested of its imagined perfection, will contribute its respective share of truth, to swell the progressive science of ages.

* Le plus rare génie est toujours en rapport avec les lumières de ses contemporains et l'on doit calculer, à-peu-près, de combien la pensée d'un homme peut dépasser les connoissances de son temps. De Stael—De la Littérature. Tom. I, p. 93.

Viewing this subject as we do, it is, for us, rather a source of congratulation than of regret, that the attention of Machiavelli was confined to particular portions of political science. The politics of his own age are thus explained, with clearness and precision; the received opinions of antiquity are connected with those of the earlier periods of modern civilization, and while the utility of some parts is limited to the light which they throw upon history, others are filled with those great and permanent truths, which are addressed to the statesman of every nation and of every age.

It was not until several years after the termination of the Discourses, that Machiavelli entered upon a new field, in his Florentine Histories. A great portion, however, of this interval was employed in the studies and observations that were essential to the accomplishment of his design, and his former labors, both as an author, and as secretary to the republic, had prepared him to engage in the task with bolder and more elevated views than had guided the steps of any preceding historian. His original design was confined to the history of Florence, from the rise of the power of the Medici, until his own times; but an attentive examination of the works of the earlier historians of the republic, convinced him that the most important portion of its history had been passed over in comparative silence.* The external wars of Florence contained, in his view, none of the important lessons which make history the surest school of wisdom. It was in the detail of the civic feuds and domestic revolutions of his country, that he sought the secrets of her prosperity, and the causes of her decline; it was only, therefore, by a full and faithful delineation of these, that he could accomplish the great end which he proposed.

Accordingly, departing from his original plan, he first traces, in a rapid and animated narrative, the revolutions

* Vide la Prefazione alle Storie Fiorentine—pass.

which followed in swift succession throughout every part of Italy, from the reign of Theodosius, until the termination of the papal schism at the Council of Constance. The history that he is preparing to relate, is thus connected with the history of the fall of the Empire, and by following the progress of the states, which are so intimately associated with Florentine history, we are enabled to understand the causes of many peculiar features in the character and revolutions of the latter.* He then retraces the ground over which his predecessors had so carelessly trod, and describes, with well apportioned fulness of detail, the domestic history of the republic, from the foundation of the city, until the rise of the Medici, in fourteen hundred and thirty-four, interweaving with his narration such portions of external history as serve, by their connexion, to throw a clearer light upon the events that he was relating. From this last period, both the internal and external history are united in a full narrative, which extends to the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent, in fourteen hundred and ninety-two.

The merit of acute and vigorous thought, which characterizes all the productions of Machiavelli, is enhanced, in the Florentine Histories, by the skill with which he arranges his subject and conducts his narration. The transitions are generally easy and natural, and the charm of the narrative is preserved by the peculiar art with which he interweaves his generalization with the facts from which it proceeds, and sometimes even with the sentence that records it. For the most important, however, of these remarks, a particular place has been reserved at the commencement of each book, where they serve as a general introduction to the portion that follows. Some of the most interesting questions are here treated with an energy and justness of thought, which surpass anything in even the best chapters of the Discourses, and with the pecu-

* This form of introduction is supposed to have suggested to Robertson the idea of his beautiful introduction to Charles V.

liar and powerful logic which distinguishes all the works of Machiavelli. If it were possible to judge a mind like his by detached passages and fragments of his general train of thought, no part of his writings could be selected with so much propriety, as the introductions to the books of the Florentine Histories.

No work, if we except the Decameron of Boccaccio, has exercised upon Italian prose, the same degree of influence as this. But while Boccaccio, misguided by his veneration for the Latin, labored to form his style upon the arbitrary inversions and periodic sentences of the Roman classics, Machiavelli, with a juster appreciation of the genius of the Italian adopted a simpler and more pleasing course, equally free from the inversions of the fourteenth century and the gallicisms of the eighteenth. The language of the purer writers of Italy has continued to our own times, as it was left them by Machiavelli, and his works possess nearly the same freshness of expression, which characterizes in our own language the prose of Dryden and of Addison.*

The Art of War was composed before the completion of the Florentine Histories. Like many of the works of the ancient philosophers, it is written in the form of a dialogue, in which the principles of the science are developed by the chief interlocutor, while an air of easy vivacity is spread over the whole piece, by the questions and remarks of the others. The merit of this work has been placed in a clear light by the letters of Count Algarotti, and when we reflect that they were written at the court of Frederick the Great, by a man cherished and honored for the brilliancy of his own genius, we shall ask no higher testimony to the military genius of Machiavelli.

* Aveano fissato la lingua;—mentre sono appasiti tanti scrittori, anche assai a lui posteriori, lo stile di Machiavelli si mantiene dopo circa tre secoli fresco, come nacque, e le frasi di cui fece uso, sono quelle che ancora si adoperano. Piguotti Sto. della Tosc. Vol VI, p. 18.

It is a singular step from the gravity of the historian and the profound reasonings of the statesman, to the airy dreams of poetry and the keenness of comic wit. But were anything more than a general outline compatible with the plan of the present paper, we should now be called to trace the steps of Machiavelli in these new and difficult paths. Poetry was for him both a solace and a recreation, and many of the productions of his muse are strongly marked with the feelings that inspired them. He sought relief in his lyre from the stings of envy and the relentlessness of persecution, and when wearied with deeper and graver thought, refreshed his mind and restored his strength by the cheerful creations of fancy. In comedy he continued, under another form, his favorite study of man, and although the subsequent progress of the art has given greater perfection to the development of plot, and to the general management of character, no writer has ever surpassed him in comic power, and in faithfully portraying the follies and vices of his age. Nor are these portions of his writings less strongly marked with his original and peculiar character. Energy, vivacity, and profound knowledge of human nature are the most striking characteristics of the poet, of the comic writer, and of the statesman.*

The style of Machiavelli is of a kind of which foreigners can in part perceive and appreciate the beauty.† Uniting the

* ——— il viver mal contento
Pel dente dell' invidia, che mi morde,
Mi darebbe più doglia e più tormento;
Se non fusse che ancor le dolci corde
D'una mia cetra che soave suona,
Fanno le muse al mio cantar non sorde.
Capit. dell' Ingratitudine, Op. Vol. VII, p. 372.

† This style, however, so easy and natural in appearance, was the result of assiduous labor and repeated correction. Some highly interesting conjectures concerning his method of study, may be formed upon the historical fragments. They consist of a continuation of the Florentine Histories; the narrative is clear and closely connected, the events of each year are

excellencies of clearness and conciseness, with great vigor of expression, and perfect harmony of arrangement, it conveys the ideas of the writer with a force and precision which make the deepest impression upon the memory, while they leave no room for misapprehension. His words and phrases are peculiarly appropriate, and have that graceful elegance which always results from a skilful use of idioms. There are no labored expressions, no nicely wrought sentences, but the whole moves on, plain and concise in argument, clear and animated in description, nervous and powerful in declamation, warming with the feelings of the writer, and reflecting every shade of his thoughts.

His descriptions are rich and varied. They are at times perfect pictures, in which every detail is carefully wrought up, with appropriate distinctness and keeping; at others, brief sketches, in which a few prominent traits, selected with the instinctive delicacy of genius, form a perfect outline of parts, and seem to indicate the rest. In every case they carry the mind forward with constantly increasing excitement, and produce the peculiar and powerful agitation with which we always draw nigh to the termination of some great catastrophe.

described with distinctness and precision, but the style is marked with all the haste and negligence of a first draft. The sketches of character, which are so beautifully polished in the Histories, form separate fragments, and seem to have been prepared with greater care. It is more than probable, that the description of the death of the Orsini and their associates was also written to be inserted in a further continuation of the Histories.

It would seem, therefore, that he first prepared a general sketch of his works, confining his attention to the collection and arrangement of his facts; that the sketches of character and most important descriptions, were often composed separately from the first draft of the body of the work, and interwoven with it in the course of correction; and, finally, that the simplicity and graceful elegance which give such a charm to his style were, as generally happens, the effect of close attention and frequent revisal.

He seldom indulges in declamation, but whenever his feelings become particularly excited, his thoughts and images flow with a warmth and energy which show how well he was qualified to excel in this species of eloquence. He describes the events of history, whether marked by great virtues or debased by glaring crimes, with a clearness and truth which reproduce the whole scene in the mind of the reader. But all comments upon the moral character of the event, all expression either of blame or of approbation are repressed, or, if admitted, are expressed in brief sentences or in short comments connected with the narration of the fact. The same manner may be observed in his reasoning: the subject is stated with clearness and precision, his arguments and illustrations follow in rapid succession, but all passing remarks, all amplification and declamation are left to the imagination of the reader.* Many critics, without observing that the same peculiar simplicity is invariably used in speaking of his own interests and misfortunes, have thought that it indicated, in the mind of the writer, a total indifference to good and evil. But this moral insensibility in the highest order of intellect, is more frequently imagined than found. The volume, from which we arise with a stronger inclination to the practice of virtue, a warm admiration for the noble and lovely in moral excellence, and a profound abhorrence of the sacrifice of the interests of many to the pleasure of an individual, can hardly have been produced by a mind wholly blunted to moral feeling. As different minds have different forms of expression, so have they different ways of conveying their lessons of virtue. The moral feeling that arises from the reading of Machiavelli, lies far deeper than the surface of his narrative; it is produced by an attentive study of the whole, instead of being gaudily painted on each single part: it breaks not out in frequent and loud bursts of applause, but

* This, of course, is applied to his usual manner, for several beautiful exceptions might be pointed out.

winds itself slowly and surely among the secret places of the heart; and the reader, although frequently unconscious of the impression that he has received, finds it mingling, like the first lessons of youth, with the whole course and character of his subsequent reflections.

Some also have supposed that Machiavelli had studied in preference the dark policy of his own times. We will not now stop to examine in what degree the writers of every age are influenced by the peculiar character of their own, or how far it is important for a public man, who seeks to be useful, to examine and understand the materials upon which he is to act; but we believe that a careful examination of the writings of Machiavelli, will show that his favorite school was in the best ages of ancient history. The most eloquent passages of his writings are those in which he describes the effect of free institutions and virtuous example upon the character of a nation. Take, for example, the short description of the sunny days of the Antonines:* how bright the colors, how strong the contrasts, how warm and glowing the whole design! It is the outbreathing of a pure and virtuous soul, forced from its path of cold reason, by the remembrance of bright days, and glowing amid the images that its own fancy has revived. Compare this with the account of Borgia,†—a clear, cold, but powerful analysis, with a warm burst of enthusiastic feeling:—the one a detail of crimes supported by greater crimes,—the vices of a demon, triumphant over the vices of petty fiends,—the other a touching sketch of sweet days of peaceful virtue, whose heavenly influence his own dark age had never felt. Machiavelli's favorite character was Scipio, and he seems to contemplate his virtues with an unvaried and exhaustless delight. Cæsar, on the contrary, he boldly condemns as a selfish tyrant, whose great genius can only render his treachery more hateful. Clearly and strongly, indeed, has he marked the line between those who

* 2. Op. Vol. IV. p. 60, et seq. † 2. Op. Vol. V. p. 215, et seq.

have employed their talents and opportunities for the establishment of their own power, and those who have obeyed no other guide than their duty to their country.

Many works convey no idea of their author. The writer is lost in the story that he relates, or has nothing sufficiently peculiar in his cast of thought to impress the image of his mind upon its own creations. But Machiavelli, although he seldom speaks of himself, is constantly before the reader; his spirit accompanies us through every page: at every step we feel the presence of an observant and superior power, that will call us to account for every thought and feeling that we indulge. Every action that he relates contains a lesson, in every event swell the germs of some important principle: the mind is excited to constant and active exertion, and the reader must think as he reads, or cease to read.

Throughout the whole course of his life he was a constant disciple of the ancients.* Their precepts were, in many points, the guides and directors of his actions, and their works the companions and consolation of his solitary hours. It was thus that he was enabled to give to his own writings the same species of charm, which distinguishes all the productions of ancient art.

As a student of the most important and interesting truths, he pursued a method, incapable, perhaps, of leading to the extensive discoveries of later philosophy, but free also from the subtleties and abstractions that have caused so much

* His veneration for literature was occasionally manifested in a very singular manner. During his long residence at his villa, after his release from prison, he usually devoted a portion of the day to the duties and amusements of the country, freely engaging in its sports, and sharing the debate and conversation of the neighbouring rustics. But on his return at evenings his rustic dress was thrown aside, and, arraying himself in the more dignified robes of the courts, he entered his study and the presence of the philosophers and historians of old, with all the care and preparation which he had been accustomed to use in presenting himself to princes and ministers.

misery in modern Europe. Led both by natural disposition, and by the character of his studies, to the observation of individual acts and particular examples, he reached not the broadest principles of general legislation, but close, cautious, and correct in his reasoning, he seldom failed to establish some important truth of easy and universal application. Born in an age that had given free license to every species of corruption, and called, by duty to his country, to observe from a close point of view the darkest features of crime, the terrible reality that surrounded him left no room for the brighter dreams of imagination, and he has painted man as he had found him, and life as he himself had proved it, amid disappointed hopes, and torture, and exile. The duties of his station compelled him to fix his view upon the probable termination of every event, and hence he sometimes appears to have lost sight of the means in an eager anticipation of the end; but it should be remembered that his mind was of that class, which, seeing with great clearness and deciding with perfect promptitude, pass rapidly over the comments and explanations, of which they cannot discover the importance. He united the keenest comic wit with the profoundest philosophical reflection,—the skill of the satirist with the gravity of the historian,—the warmth of poetic feeling with the shrewdness of political sagacity; and bringing into actual life the same versatility and apparent contradiction of character,—the pliant skill of an Italian diplomatist with the virtues of a faithful citizen, and the tenderness of an affectionate father and friend. In short, whether we consider him in his life, or in his works, we shall be constantly struck with the peculiar and strongly marked character of both, and be prepared to acknowledge that, if the "mind of man be indeed the proper study of mankind," few volumes contain a richer store of varied wisdom, than the life and the writings of Machiavelli.

LOUIS THE NINTH.*

"Louis IX., dont l'eglise a fait *Saint Louis*, était réelment un prince aussi parfait qu il pouvat l'etre dans son temps. Il eut avec la valeur militaire et le courage politique, la Constance du véritable chrétien. Il fut vraiment le restaurateur de la justice; et il consacra ce beau principe d'humanité, qu' on devrait inscrire partout où l'on décide de la liberté et de la vie des hommes: *Droit est toujours plus près d'absoudre que de condamner.*"—M. A. THIERS.

EVERY student of history knows that a few periods only are worthy of careful and continued attention; if these are well understood, the times between them are also; but if they remain in darkness, the whole tale of the world's doings remains a puzzle and a mystery. And this is equally true, whether we read for mere amusement, or to learn the principles of national growth, or to become acquainted with the heroes and the monsters of our race. Hampdens and Washingtons appear at such epochs; and at such also come into view the Mirabeaus, the Robespierres, and the Benedict Arnolds, to show us how vast a depth of evil lies in us. But in studying such periods, we are apt to fall into the error of dwelling chiefly upon the rapid and violent changes which close them, rather than upon the quiet, mighty agencies

* *Michelet's History of France.* Translated by G. H. SMITH, F.G.S. New York: Appleton and Co. Vol. I. 1846. 8vo.

which brought those changes to pass. Among all the histories of the French Revolution that have been written, we do not know of one which clearly, fully, and vividly traces, from the time of Louis the Fourteenth, those influences which caused the final outburst, and also those which gave to that outburst its peculiar character. Even the development of the causes of our own Revolution has not been attempted, independent of the various colonial affairs which had little or no connexion with it. It is usual, indeed, to preface the account of any great change by a view of things before the change took place; and occasionally by a statement of all that has happened since man was created; or even, as in the case of Professor Rafinesque's Annals, prefixed to Marshall's History of Kentucky, by a suggestion of various matters which took place long before Adam was fashioned from clay; but in most such cases, the introduction is hurried, vague, and unimpressive. We may notice, as examples of what we mean, the account drawn up by Scott, and that given by Alison, of France before the meeting of the States-General in 1789. But the error of which we speak as common among historical students is especially seen, we think, in the almost total neglect of the period in which the feudal yielded to the monarchical spirit, and when, though without volcano-bursts, the religious, moral, social, political, and industrial state of Western Europe underwent so vast a change. To speak of that period as a whole, except in the most general, and therefore most useless manner, would evidently be beyond the limits of a review; but we may, perhaps, turn the thoughts and inquiries of some of our readers to the era in question, by an account of one who bore a leading, though unconscious, part in changing the government of baronial force and priestly rule for that of regal law. We refer to Louis the Ninth, St. Louis, the champion of the Church, who yet undermined her power; the respecter of all feudal rights and obligations, who nevertheless destroyed the life of feudalism.

Louis was born April 25, 1215. It was in the midst of the war against the Albigenses. A week before his birth, his father, prince of France, followed by bishops, counts, and knights innumerable, reached Lyons on his way to Languedoc, through which devoted land he marched unresisted, levelling, as he went, the walls of Toulouse and Narbonne. Six weeks after the birth of St. Louis, John of England met his barons at Runnymede, and grudgingly gave them their Magna Charta. Seven months after his birth, Innocent the Third, under whom the theocracy founded by Hildebrand attained its height, met the fourth Lateran Council, the most numerous of the ancient assemblies of the Western Church, and among whose seventy canons was that which for the first time made confession obligatory. When Louis had lived through thirteen months, his father, who had passed to England, claiming its crown, was feasting among the barons of John, and listening to the shouts of welcome sent up by the citizens of London. A few months more, and the little boy, scarce two years old, was but learning his earliest prayers at the knees of Blanche of Castile when his father's reverses began; and Blanche heard that her husband was worsted in England, and condemned at Rome. The old, unscrupulous Philip Augustus dared not aid his suffering son, so hard did the priests threaten; but the young, devout, priest-led Blanche was not to be led or driven, when all that was dear to her was at stake; she gathered her knights, provided her vessels, and sent her reinforcements to the aid of her lord; but, alas! even then English seamen were to be feared, and Blanche's little fleet was defeated, and the prince was obliged to surrender.

And now had Louis reached his ninth year; gentle, thoughtful, and filled with a sense of duty, such as rarely falls to the share of human beings, and especially to those of regal education, the little boy grew up under the influence of his mother's devotional, but independent spirit. In July of

that year, 1223, his grandfather Philip died, and the claimant of the English throne, under the name of Louis the Lion, became monarch of France, and our young saint his heir-apparent. Louis the Lion was by no means worthy of his name, which was, in truth, not given him from any supposed resemblance to the king of beasts, nor even through flattery, but was bestowed upon him just before his death, to help in the fulfilment of an ancient prophecy. He was weak in body, mind, and soul, and far more truly priest-ridden than either his wife or son, though far less pious than either. And yet in him were united for the first time the races of Capet and Charlemagne; and as the streets of Paris after his consecration, hung as they were with the richest cloths and most beautiful garlands, resounded to the songs of Troubadours and the music of the dancers, men felt they knew not what strange hope of a king who should be one indeed; not a suzerain only, but a sovereign; a follower of the great Charles, as well as his descendant; a monarch who would curb the cruel power of the barons, and enable the honest and industrious to live in peace. Alas for their hopes! The first request made by his barons to the new king was for a discharge of all the debts which they owed the Jews, the money-lenders; and their request was granted. For three years Louis the Lion reigned, quarrelling with and conquering the English and the Albigeois; and died, at length, of a fever resulting from the fatigues and exposures of his last campaign against the heretics of the South. St. Louis was not yet quite twelve years old. It did not require much sagacity to foresee that a regency of nine years would try the value and strength of those additions which Philip Augustus and his predecessors had made to the kingly power. The claims of the late monarchs were by no means pleasing to the turbulent feudal nobles, and Louis and Blanche saw no less plainly than the barons that the minority of their son would be a time of contest. The last acts of the expiring king, with

a view to the future, were to bind all about him by an oath to obey and consecrate his son as their monarch, and to confide him to the care of his mother.

Blanche was at Paris when she heard of the death of her husband. She felt strong in her self-confidence that it was necessary not only that she should have the education of her son in her hands, but also that she should have the regency of the kingdom; and yet the fact that she was a Spaniard was as much against her as her sex, in the eyes of the French nobility; so that she knew her chance of being what she wished was small, unless secured by management. On two men of influence she believed she could rely, the papal legate, and Thibaud, Count of Champagne. The latter was one of the most noted men of the day, as well as the most powerful vassal of the crown. A poet, a knight, a gallant, and a determined upholder of his feudal rights, he had quarrelled with the late king, nay, was even by the lovers of scandal in later times openly accused of having procured his death, and yet was looked to by his widow as one in whom she might trust for support. It is hard to say why this was so. The students of Paris, who in after days hated Thibaud and Blanche both, attributed it to a criminal passion; but the tale is clearly unsupported. It may have been that the queen knew the vanity and the weakness of the count, and felt sure that he would desert the barons as soon as he could serve his own purposes better by doing so. Certain it is, that he was weak enough to make men think him wicked. He had already, before the king's death, bound himself to Peter Mauclerc of Brittany, the Count de la Marche, step-father of Henry the Third of England, and others, to uphold the rights of the feudal vassals against the growing power of the crown. He was not present at the consecration of the young king; indeed, the king's uncle, Philip the Rude, threatened to have the gates of Rheims shut in his face if he appeared before them, so insulting had been his conduct to the late monarch;

and he was regarded as the chief of the malcontents. He even went so far as to collect men and arms, as if he intended open rebellion. Then, suddenly, to the astonishment of all but the queen, Thibaud left the party of the nobles, and at Tours, in February, 1227, did homage to the king, and became his true subject and defender. And he needed a defender; Philip the Rude probably meant to make himself regent at a fitting opportunity; and with him upon the one hand, and Philip "the evil clerk" of Brittany upon the other, poor Blanche and her young saint would have been close beset. By her alliance with the Count of Champagne, therefore, she secured a powerful friend, and only drove into open enmity a secret foe. The discontented nobles, finding themselves thus weakened by the desertion of Thibaud, resolved upon seizing the person of the young king, and withdrawing him from his mother's influence; and in an attempt which they made to do so they might have succeeded, had not the burghers of Paris, who justly dreaded the power of the great lords, flocked out to Montlhery, where Louis then was, with arms in their hands, and borne him with shouts and songs to his capital. It was an incident to affect the mind of a child like Louis; his barons, his peers, were seeking to imprison him, to tear him from the mother whom he so much loved and reverenced, and the common people rose and became his deliverers.

From that time Blanche remained in substance, if not in name, the regent of the kingdom; and woman and foreigner as she was, she ruled it as no native-born man-monarch had ever done. But she did not govern without opposition. The whole baronial power stood antagonist to her and her supporter, Thibaud. Against him they warred on the pretence that he was the murderer of Louis the Lion; and in 1229 they ravaged his county of Champagne, and raised up a counter claimant to all his estates. In 1230, worn out and defeated, he was forced to take refuge in Paris, and to bind

himself to go upon the crusade, as a kind of expiation for his alleged, but never proved or acknowledged crime of king-killing. He was a strange man, this Troubadour count, and the influence of Blanche over him was also strange. Before his defeat above referred to, the barons had tried to bribe him back to their party, and old Peter, the priest-hater of Brittany, had agreed to give him, as a third wife, his daughter. Thibaud entered into an agreement to rejoin them. The marriage-day was fixed, the bride was decked, the priest ready, when the groom, already on his way to the altar, received a note from Blanche requiring him to abandon the plan and break off the proposed alliance; and, without a moment's hesitation, he obeyed. But though the regent had the Duke of Brittany and all his friends in the North to contend with, she was by no means unobservant of the opportunity which offered itself in the South to add greatly to the royal power; and after forwarding the persecutions in Languedoc, through 1228, she succeeded, by a treaty made the following April, in securing to the crown the ultimate possession of that beautiful land. Raymond the Seventh, by the terms of that treaty, gave up his kingdom, and his daughter paid to the crown twenty thousand marks of silver, broke down the walls and filled the ditches which defended Toulouse, destroyed the fortifications of thirty other towns and strongholds, bound his subjects by oath to take arms against him if he shrunk from the conditions of the treaty, and bound himself to do battle with the Count de Foix and others, his old friends and allies. The volume of the history of Languedoc closes with the seventh Raymond.

Nor was Blanche, while thus successful in the South, less fortunate in her contest with Peter the Breton, whom, in 1231, she brought to terms, and so closed her civil wars, having placed the monarchy of France on a firmer basis than it had rested upon for two centuries and a half; for to be unresisted under a woman-regent was more than to be

bowed to under Philip Augustus. From that time until 1236, when Louis reached his twenty-first year, the internal history of the kingdom is nearly a blank.

And with the majority of St. Louis little or no change took place in the affairs of France, although there commenced a more general stir in those of Europe at large. It was the midst of the contest between the second Frederick of Germany, and Honorius the Third, Gregory the Ninth, and Innocent the Fourth. The second of these prelates then occupied the papal throne, a stern, fearless old man of ninety years, whom reverses could not vanquish, but only kill,—a worthy opponent of the strong-minded monarch of Germany. In 1227, within six months after the time of his elevation to the papacy, Gregory had excommunicated Frederick, because he did not depart, as was expected, on the crusade; in 1228, the monarch was denounced anew, because, unforgiven, he dared to set sail for the Holy Land, and fight for the Holy Sepulchre. The Templars, Hospitallers, and Teutonic knights were called on to oppose this wilful champion of Christendom. Jerusalem, because he obtained possession of it, was laid under an interdict, and the fearless emperor was forced to crown himself, no priest daring even to say mass. Returning to Italy, Frederick wrung a repeal of the excommunication from Gregory by force of arms; but the bitter blood was not sweetened. In 1239, the pope again launched his thunderbolt, and the war of extermination went on, until the successes of his antagonist laid the worn head of the Church, now ninety-four years old, upon his bed of death, in 1241.

Meanwhile, in 1237, came Baldwin, the Latin claimant of the throne of Constantinople, with the True Crown of Thorns in its casket under his arm, asking for money to aid him in recovering his kingdom. For a time he contrived to obtain assistance from certain Venetian money-lenders, with whom he placed the relic as collateral security; but he was not

satisfied to leave it thus, and wished to prevail upon some pious monarch to purchase his treasure. France already possessed one undoubted original of the same relic; but Blanche and Louis were given to the feelings of the times, and the young king readily agreed to the proposition of the displaced emperor. One difficulty at first, however, seemed insurmountable;—to deal in relics, by the rules of the Church, was simony. But there were clever heads and hair-splitting advocates then, no less than now, and it was soon seen that all trouble would be avoided by this simple contrivance. Baldwin should present the Crown to his pious friend Louis as a free gift and gage of love; while the French monarch, not to be outdone in generosity, should, out of pure affection, bestow upon the somewhat needy emperor such a sum of money as would be a fair equivalent. In December, 1238, two Dominicans started with full purses for Constantinople,* there to exchange presents; and, returning after six months' absence, met, in the heat of August, the pious king of France dressed in a simple tunic, or shirt, and barefooted, walking out from Paris to receive and carry upon his own shoulders the inestimable gift of Baldwin to the cathedral of Notre Dame. It was a sight to be noted, and most characteristic of the day, that procession of bishops and nobles, common people and children, all uncovered and with bare feet, chanting litanies as they followed their saintly king, with his long locks and bended head, bearing, in company with his brother Robert, the chest of the Sacred Crown.

But soon affairs of wider interest and a more stirring character than the reception of relics, and the building of chapels to contain them, were presented to the mind of the son of Blanche. In 1227, Genghiz Khan died; before 1237, all Europe was troubled by the fear of the new swarm

* Or Venice; see Gibbon.

from Central Asia, which was fast inundating Russia, Poland, Hungary, and already with angry murmurs hovered on the confines of the Empire. The Saracens, most exposed to the devouring hosts of Tartars, sent embassies to Christendom to ask aid against a common foe; the Old Man of the Mountain by his messengers offered fraternity to the rulers of France and England. On all sides was great trembling, but from none came signs of success to the West. Frederick called on his fellow-monarchs to aid him, but they were deaf; and his old enemy, the pope, never ceased to denounce and condemn him. The politicians of England and France refused any help to the Saracens, or the Christians of the East; as to the infidels, they said, "Let the dogs worry and kill one another;" for their brethren they could afford to pray, but by no means to fight, and day by day the Tartar hordes came on. But as yet the sound of their coming was distant. Blanche, indeed, heard it, and wept, lest all the faithful were to be borne from the earth. "Courage, my mother," said her son; "if we conquer, we drive these wretches to perdition; if the victory is theirs, they but open heaven's gates for us."

Other sounds, and nearer, of trouble and confusion drew, for a time, the thoughts of Louis from the enemies of his faith. The old feudal spirit was dormant, not dead, and Louis was called upon to renew the contests which his mother had waged during his boyhood. It was in the spring or summer of 1241 that Louis invited his nobles of the West to meet him at Saumer in Anjou, where he wished to present to them his brother Alphonso, who had married the daughter of Raymond the Seventh, and whom the king proposed to invest with the counties of Poitou and Auvergne. The monarch was not unaware of the feeling which prevailed among the Western barons in favor of the claims of England to that portion of his dominions. Philip Augustus had gained by force or diplomacy much of that country to the French

crown; and the English affirmed, that, when Louis the Lion was caught in their island, as in a mouse-trap, in 1217, he had sworn, as one condition of his release, to restore all his father's conquests in Poitou and thereabouts. When, therefore, the Lion's son met at Saumur old Peter the priest-hater of Brittany, with his heir, and the Count de la Marche, whose wife was mother to the King of England, with others of doubtful sentiments, we may be assured that he looked round upon his guests, as they sat solemn in their silks and cloths of gold, with some uneasiness. Not that Louis was a coward; no braver heart ever beat; but he said to himself, as he looked forward to the prospect of a civil war to grow out of the investiture he proposed to make, "Perhaps my father took that oath of restitution, and I am bringing on bloodshed by upholding injustice." Sad and doubting, the conscientious king sat in the midst of his black-browed peers. The feasting at Saumur was over at length, and all took horse for Poictiers, where his brother was to receive his counties, and the homage of his vassals. Among these vassals was Hugh de la Marche, and he, like Louis, rode sad and doubting. But by degrees his doubts cleared up, and he determined on flat rebellion. Too weak to come to blows at once, but resolved never to acknowledge Alphonso as his suzerain, and in due time to assert the alleged rights of the English monarch, he left Louis, assembled his followers, and, stationing himself at his château of Lusignan, offered no violence, but effectually prevented, by his show of force, the king's return from Poictiers to Paris. Louis the Saint found himself trapped, as his father had been in England; one by one, all his nobles left him; and after a fortnight's forced stay at Poictiers, he was obliged to make terms of some kind with his vassal, in order to get home again. It was clear that feudalism was not yet dead.

Had any doubt as to that fact remained, however, it would have been impossible to question it after the following Christ-

mas. At that epoch, Alphonso, young and hopeful, Count of Poitou and Auvergne, and in his wife's right presumptive heir to the beautiful domains of Toulouse, called together his vassals at his capital, Poictiers, to hold high festival, and complete the solemn act of feudal investiture. From far and near men and women flocked to the ancient capital of the Pictones; its crooked, steep streets were filled with vine-dressers from the borders of the Vienne, with nobles and squires, dames and damsels, clerks and monks. The great cathedral, which had been two centuries in progress, and was nearly completed, echoed the solemn music of the season; in the Gothic castle all was preparing for feast and merriment. Alphonso received, as they arrived, knight and baron, and to each assigned his dwelling, already prepared at the expense of the new count, who was to pay all costs. And among the rest came Hugh de la Marche and Isabel his wife, mother of England's weak monarch; they, too, were welcome, —especially so, perhaps, as their coming seemed to promise all harmony, and with due honor and ceremonious respect were they received. Gloomy still, but in no degree doubting, was the great vassal of Alphonso. Since his secession, after the meeting at Saumur, he had employed his time well. Silently messengers had passed from him to England,—to Navarre, over which Blanche's friend, the Troubadour Count Thibaud of Champagne was then king,—to Toulouse, where Raymond sat in smothered anger, ready enough to war against his daughter's husband or any one else,—and over the Pyrences, through the autumn-snows, to the kings of Aragon and Castile. Bonds holding them all together, in opposition to the king of France, had been silently knit while the leaves were falling; and now, when the bare branches glittered like silver with the hoar-frost, the lord of La Marche had come to defy his superior in the first flush of his pride, and before the face of all his vassals. The day for rendering the act of homage was at hand;—"To-morrow, and the cere-

mony which assures me my rank and counties is complete;" —so thought Alphonso, as he passed from group to group in the public place by the castle. But why these groups gathering toward nightfall in these short December days? If Alphonso asked that question within himself, a quick reply came from without. Hugh de la Marche stands before him a page holding his battle-horse; near by, Isabel sits upon her palfrey, amid armed retainers. "I have been deceived," says the haughty vassal, in his most arrogant tone; "never, never, I swear to you, will I hold myself your man. Against all right you have usurped this county of Poitou, the birthright of Richard of Cornwall, who has been fighting for you in Palestine while you have been robbing him here." Turning on his heel without more words, he sprang into his saddle, struck the spurs into his steed, and, rejoining his wife, rode toward the southern gate. Alphonso stood stupefied; he was recalled to his senses by the bursting of flames from the house where the rebel had been lodged; he had fired it in the moment of departure. The young noble saw in the conflagration a symbol of coming war. War, indeed, was already declared by the act of the Count de la Marche.

That war occupied the next year. We need not enter into its details, although it was the last of the feudal wars; it is enough to say that Hugh de la Marche was forced on his knees to beg forgiveness; that Henry, the Incapable, of England, was utterly worsted, and nearly taken prisoner; and that the Spanish kings attended to their own affairs, leaving their neighbour Raymond to shift for himself, which he did, by submission. The gentle French monarch dealt with his rebels as leniently when conquered, as he had vigorously when in arms. From Raymond he required only adherence to Blanche's treaty of 1229; and when his lords wished him to put to death De la Marche's son, who was taken prisoner while commanding at Fontenay, his answer was, "No; he has done no wrong in obeying his father."

There is another anecdote of this war worthy of remembrance. Richard of Cornwall, brother to Henry the Third, and son of Isabella of La Marche, had done good service to some French knights in Palestine. During the reverses of Henry, he sent his brother, dressed in his Palestine pilgrim's dress, and with a staff in place of a sword, to ask of Louis a cessation of hostilities. When the French knights, many of whom had been in the Holy Land, heard that Cornwall was thus approaching their camp, the memory of his gallantry came strongly on their hearts; and in the truest spirit of chivalry, they went out to the verge of the English lines, and received as an honored guest the brother and son of their leading enemies, formed an escort for him, and brought him to the throne of their monarch. He, too, forgot the foe in the crusader, took the prince by the hand, treated him as a brother, and granted the armistice requested.

St. Louis, as we have said, by this war of 1242 finished those contests of the crown with its vassals which had been going on since the time of his ancestor, Louis the Fat. But it was not by warfare that he was to aid in breaking down the strongholds of feudalism. The vassals might have been beaten time and again, and yet the *spirit* of feudalism, still surviving, would have raised up new champions to contend against the crown. St. Louis struck at the spirit of the Middle Age, and therein insured the downfall of its forms and whole embodiment. He fought the last battles against feudalism, because, by a surer means than battling, he took, and unconsciously, the life-blood from the opposition to the royal authority. Unconsciously, we say; he did not look on the old order of things as evil, and try to introduce a better; he did not selfishly contend for the extension of his own power; he was neither a great reformer, nor a (so-called) wise king. He undermined feudalism, because he hated injustice; he warred with the Middle Age, because he could not tolerate its disregard of human rights; and he paved the way for Philip

le-Bel's struggle with the papacy, because he looked upon religion and the church as instruments for man's salvation, not as tools for worldly aggrandizement. He is, perhaps, the only monarch on record who failed in most of what he undertook of active enterprise, who was under the control of the prejudices of his age, who was a true conservative, who never dreamed of effecting great social changes,—and who yet, by his mere virtues, his sense of duty, his power of conscience, made the mightiest and most vital reforms.

One of these reforms was the abolition of the trial by combat. Soon after the Poitou war, when poor old De la Marche, his gray locks bowed to the dust, was moaning his folly and his fortune, one of his vassals, who had sworn deadly enmity to him, accused the old man of unknown felonies, and dared him to the combat. His son wished to fight in his stead; but the ungenerous Alphonso insisted upon the appearance of his ancient enemy and insulter, in person. Against this sentence there was one cry of protest, and Louis, whose attention was called to the matter, interfered, and forbade the contest.

But though the king, as we have said, was the conqueror in his Poitou campaign, he returned from that region an invalid. A great part of his army had been made unwell by want of proper food, by foul air, and impure water. The king himself passed from one phase of disease to another, until at length, in November, 1244, a dysentery settled upon him. Sick, and each day more sick,—from mouth to mouth, from town to town, the sad news spread. The churches echoed with the prayers and vows of priests and people, pleading for their king; for their noble, just, sympathising king. Around Pontoise, where the sufferer lay, were knots of country folks, and of Parisians who had walked out so far,—all busy with the same sad questioning. No good news for them; sick, and each day more sick,—so the word goes. And at last they say he is dead. Men look heavenward,

where is there hope for them now, unless in heaven? Then comes a rumor that the tale was not true, and the monarch lives. Again comes a rumor that he is not only living, but has assumed the cross. How was it? Let us see what Joinville relates, and imagine the little points he omits. The sickness grew ever worse, he tells us, and no hope was left. Last breathing, the good king lay, wasted in body, resigned and fearless in soul. In his clear, calm mind he revolved, as we guess, the progress of the infidel arms, the neglect and deadness of Christendom on behalf of the land of Jesus. In his sick chamber, in subdued tones, they talked of the Tartar conquests, and of the barbarities of the Karismians in Palestine;—the sick man heard, but spoke not. They spoke to him, and he could not answer; scarce any pulse, scarce any breath; his kind eyes closed! so he lies, sinking away. Blanche, his mother, and Margaret, his wife, worn with watching and weeping, have left him to the two hired nurse-women. One of them from time to time bends over him; more and more deathlike grows his calm countenance; the smile of the departing soul hovering there, not yet fixed. "Does he live still?" reverently asks the other waiting-woman. The more eager of the two, who has been impatiently watching for the moment of death, listens, touches his wrist, holds a morsel of down to his nostrils, clasps her hands, and with upturned eyes answers, "Alas! it is all over." Her companion springs to the bedside, holds back the sheet with which the first would have covered his face, and tries in her turn to discover how life and death stand within him; patiently she listens, and patiently she presses his arm,—stands a moment, her pallid lips parted, then cries with swimming lids, "He lives, and *will* live to confound the enemies of the Lord." His vital power, just at the ebb, begins to swell again as he heard, in his living-death trance, her glad cry, her bold prophecy; his heart beats stronger, his lungs play again; by and by his voice comes, and his

first words are, "Bring me the red cross." The last of the crusaders assumes the badge of his Master!

It is not our purpose to follow Louis either in his first or second crusade. If the great work of his life was not to be done by fighting at home, still less was it to be accomplished by battles in Egypt or Tunis. His mission was other and greater than he dreamed of, and his service to Christendom was wholly unlike that which he proposed to himself. Of his Eastern labors and sufferings we can give but the leading dates, with here and there an anecdote worthy of recollection, as illustrating either the character of the man or of his times. In November, 1244, he took the cross; but it was June of 1248 before he was able to leave Paris to embark upon his cherished undertaking. During the interval, he labored unceasingly to rouse all Europe to the necessity of union on behalf of the Holy Land, and in opposition to the infidels, who threatened, unless met by united Christendom, to plant their horse-tails upon the cathedrals of Paris and of Rome. He even, by what we should call a trick, enlisted his nobles as crusaders, and the act is worthy of notice as illustrating the moral tone of the age; for, be it remembered, it was the act of one of the most truthful and conscientious of men. At Christmas it was usual for the king to give to the gentles in his service new dresses. Louis invited his followers to meet him on that day at an early mass before it was yet light. They came willingly, and each as he entered received a dress at the door, given in the king's name, and which he was requested to wear at the ceremony. All of course complied! On bended knees, with bowed heads, around the altar, they listened to the services of the church, in the dim waxen twilight. By and by the rays of the morning struggled through the darkness and the censer-smoke, and for the first time friend looked toward and smiled on friend. And in all faces there was surprise; some looked blank, some fearful, some merry; what meant all this dumb show? It meant

this. On each shoulder stood, indelible, the red cross. And as the secret became evident, and they awoke to the truth, that, with their new cloaks, the pious monarch had bound them to the crusade, anger, grief, trouble, joy, and wonder, in varied combinations, spoke from the silent faces of the group of courtiers, in the midst of whom stood silently the grave, calm, kindly king.

But of all the efforts which Louis was called on to make in order to bring about the desired union of Christendom, the most difficult and the least successful was his attempt to reconcile the emperor of Germany, who was a kind of royal Luther, with the unforgiving Innocent the Fourth, who, after a long vacancy of the papal throne, had succeeded to Gregory the Ninth. Innocent was a man of capacity and immense stubbornness. The contest between pope and emperor was such that nothing but death could end it; they had been friends, but now were foes; and what enmity so deadly as that between old comrades? In December, 1250, Frederick died; and the head of the church, then at Lyons, whither he had been driven in the struggle, returned to Rome, singing hymns of joy, and at once proclaimed a crusade, not against Turks or Tartars, but against the successor of his ancient enemy.

Meanwhile, in France, all was made ready for the departure of the champions of the cross. But their chief was destined to be yet further tried. With ceaseless sighs and prayers, his mother and wife beset him, telling him his mind was disturbed at the moment he took the vow to go to Palestine, and that he was no more bound thereby. Gently the pious king replied to their urgency; but still they urged their suit that he would stay, and brought the bishop of Paris to support their pleas. "It may be so," said Louis mildly. Hope glowed in their affectionate, unheroic eyes. "I was not in a state to act wisely, you say." "You were not, surely." "Behold, then, I tear my cross from my shoulder."

They leaped for joy. "And am I now well? Can I judge wisely now?" "Most wisely, beloved son and lord." "Well, then,"—and we may think the unruffled monarch could scarce suppress a smile, though his peace-loving eyes kindled with the hope of yet warring for God,—"well, then, I now resume the cross;—and no food shall pass my lips till I am bound anew, sworn soldier of my Lord."

On the twenty-fifth of August, 1248, the devoted crusader embarked for Cyprus. Having passed the winter there, on the fifth of June, 1249, he landed in Egypt, which was to be conquered before Palestine could be safely attacked. On the seventh of June, Damietta was entered, and there the French slept and feasted, wasting time, strength, and money, until the twentieth of the following November. Then came the march southward; the encampment upon the Nile; the terrors of the Greek fire; the skirmishes which covered the plain with dead; the air heavy with putridity and pestilence; the putrid water; the fish fat with the flesh of the dead; sickness, weakness, retreat, defeat, captivity. On the sixth of April, 1250, Louis and his followers were prisoners to the Mussulmans; Louis might have saved himself, but would not quit his followers; he had been faithful thus far, and would be till death. And when he had procured his freedom, he would not yet leave the East for his own land. He thought of the prisoners in the hands of the Mamelukes, he remembered the Christians of the Holy Land, and determined to remain where he could best serve the suffering. On the eighth of May, 1250, Louis was a freeman, and it was not until the twenty-fifth of April, 1254, that he set sail to return to his native shores, where Blanche, who had been regent during his absence, had some months since yielded up her breath.

On the seventh of September, he entered Paris, sad and worn. All met him with joy and honor, but with eyes abashed he walked without a smile through the streets of his

capital. Ten years had passed, and what had been done? Poor king! bowed with self-reproaches, he little knew that during those ten years he had done, though none saw it, and he knew nothing of it, a vast work,—a work to make his reign ever memorable; he had founded a throne in the hearts of his subjects, and had made himself, through their affections, omnipotent as the leader of the great crusade against the abuses of the Middle Age. Every wounded knight that had come from Egypt, every freed captive, every soldier that retired from service, had told with enthusiasm of the sanctity and humanity of their king. A knight, a devotee, a kind and just man, he met at one point or another the wishes and prejudices of every class; but especially, by his sympathy with the masses, and his readiness to consider their generally neglected welfare and rights, he won upon the body of his people, and laid the foundation for that strong feeling which not only led at last to his canonization, but made every ordinance of his life at once bind them as subjects, and control them as the word of a true hero. The shepherd-crusade of 1251, which had degenerated into a mere rabble-swarm of thieves and rogues, began in a love for the captive monarch; and the feeling which prompted that hasty and evil movement, a feeling in favor of Louis, as a contrast, if not an antagonist, to the proud, luxurious, and selfish prelates and nobles, continued after his return from captivity. And scarce had he landed, before he began that course of legislation which continued until once more he embarked upon the crusade.

In captivity, under suffering, treated with imperfect justice, and at the mercy of tyrannical masters, we may easily believe that Louis had revolved in his mind once and again the injustice done in his own realm, and to his own people. In his lonely hours of distress and sickness, how natural was it for such a soul to conceive of a complete revisal and reform in those judicial processes which he was conscious wrought so

much wrong; and especially, to so true a soul, how natural the determination to begin by righting the wrongs done by himself and his ancestors! True and noble soul, indeed! full of prejudices, and superstitions, and errors, it may be;—but how free from the mass of those errors and evils which beset the men who then breathed, walked, laughed, and did work in the world! Where shall we look among rulers for a parallel in point of disinterested heroism, unless to our own Washington?

In his first legislative action, Louis proposed to himself these objects,—to put an end to judicial partiality, to prevent needless and oppressive imprisonment for debt, to stop unfounded criminal prosecutions, and to mitigate the horrors of legalized torture. In connexion with these general topics, he made laws to bear oppressively upon the Jews, to punish prostitution and gambling, and to diminish intemperance. And it is worthy of remark, that this last point was to be attained by forbidding innkeepers to sell to any others than travellers,—a measure now (six hundred years later) under discussion in some parts of our Union, with a view to the same end.

But the wish which this rare monarch had to recompense all who had been wronged by himself and forefathers was the uppermost wish of his soul. He felt that to do justice himself was the surest way to make others willing to do it. Commissioners were sent into every province of the kingdom to examine each alleged case of royal injustice, and with power in most instances to make instant restitution. He himself went forth to hear and judge in the neighbourhood of his capital, and as far north as Normandy. The points which weighed mainly, however, on the mind of Louis were not the private wrongs which were to be set aright, but those international difficulties whence grew ceaseless war in Christendom, the victories of the infidels, and scandal to the name of the Prince of Peace. France was embroiled on the one

hand with England, and on the other with Aragon. Neither of these powers was sufficiently strong to wring any thing from her: and as to the justice of the matters, both were *Oregon questions*,—each party in the contest honestly conceived itself to have a clear claim to the disputed territory. Here, then, was a case for heathen patriotism to struggle with Christian justice in the mind of the stronger monarch. It may be they did struggle, but not long. The self-forgetting crusader looked on justice and generosity as nobler virtues than mere heathen patriotism; he saw, with his heart and conscience, if not his mind, that whoso begins by loving his country more than right, will end by loving himself more than his country. With England and with Aragon, during the year 1258, he concluded treaties, in opposition to swarms of wise, selfish advisers, whereby peace and concession were substituted for obstinacy and war.

Such were the first acts of our crusader, when he came to his home once more. Can we wonder that men already, in their speechless hearts, canonized him? And when, a little after, it was noised abroad that the king lay deadly ill, and every hour's news were listened for with faces ready to weep, or beam with joy,—how heart-touching to hear men tell one another at the street-corners, and in the butcher's shops, and by the dusty road-side, or in the crisp harvest-field,—how the dear king had called his young heir, now sixteen, to his bedside, and had said to him,—"Fair son, I pray you to make the people of your kingdom love you; for I would rather a Scotchman from Scotland should come and govern the people of my realm well and justly, than that you, child of my loins, should rule them in evil." Poor Louis! he rose from his sick-bed; but his son lay down in his stead, and rose no more.

And as he grew yet older, the spirit of generosity grew stronger daily in his bosom. He would have no hand in the affairs of Europe, save to act, wherever he could, as peace-

maker. Many occasions occurred where all urged him to profit by power and a show of right, a naked legal title, to possess himself of valuable fiefs; but Louis shook his head sorrowfully and sternly, and did as his inmost soul told him the law of God directed. And with all this, we say again, he had no spark of radicalism in him; nay, he was eminently conservative. He reverenced the old feudal customs, and never, by direct means, warred against them. He wrought in opposition to the *infinite* evils of feudalism, its *God*-antagonism,—not against its *conventional* mischiefs, its impolicy, and awkward semiorganization. When his friend Joinville, in 1248, would not take the oath taken by those who held directly from the crown, because his immediate lord was the Count of Champagne, Louis may have smiled at the feudal foolery of his faithful follower, but deemed him none the less a friend. Many reformers are like the wolf, which tears the cast-off coat of the flying victim, and loses its prey; Louis, like all heart-directed Christian laborers for humanity, struck at the living fugitive, not the dead garment that was left behind.

And how did he strike? We have already referred to his earlier laws on behalf of right; let us now look farther.

Feudalism rested on physical force. Its gospel was given in three words,—"Might makes right." Upon this idea all feudal relations depended, all feudal laws (if we may use such a word) were founded. In a double sense, it was a system of *feuds*. Its legislation rested on arbitrary will; its judicial proceedings on strong limbs, able to work out the judgments of God; its executive functions were confided to men-at-arms. The despotism of baronial ignorance and obstinacy, the judicial combat, and private warfare, formed the three divisions of feudal, legal, and political science. Against these Louis the Ninth labored. His clear soul knew that the determinations of the church, from the time of Hildebrand and earlier, against these things, were not mere ecclesiastical

censures, but were expressions of the deepest feelings of man's nature. And though the church in practice had fallen far short of the theory of her great leaders on this and countless other points,—though in her bosom, too, were despots, tempters of God, and lovers of blood,—the great truth which lay in the action of those leaders was evident to the seeing eyes of the just monarch of France. In October, 1245, before he went upon his sad Egyptian pilgrimage, he had issued an ordinance, the purpose of which was to counteract the old Germanic, barbarian, and so feudal, feeling, that a wrong done was not to be revenged by injury to the wrong-doer, but must be washed out by vengeance taken on his innocent kindred. He that slew his brother's murderer did but take the place of the hangman or headsman; he must slay one who did not deserve slaying, and so place himself on an equality with the offender. This, within limits, Louis forbade; if a man must have blood, he should take the blood of the wrong-doer. Next came a law by which either party liable to be involved in a private warfare might, by going to a feudal superior, prevent the resort to force; the other party, in short, was bound to keep the peace, and if he did not keep it, he was hung. But these steps, though large ones, were not enough to satisfy the conscientious law-maker; and in January, 1257, by the advice and consent of his council, he utterly forbade all private warfare whatsoever. True, his prohibition did not stop it entirely and at once; but from the moment he promulgated this last edict, we may be sure that all who reverenced its author, all who loved quiet, all who saw the evils of overruling physical force, all who recognized the immense moral mischief of the old system, united in upholding the ordinance of Louis, and founding the reign of modern law. The husbandman whose corn-fields were trampled to mire, the merchant whose goods roving bands of armed men seized by the way, the mechanic whose shop was searched for arms and accoutrements, the priest who was

insulted by the lawless soldiery, the newly seen law-student whose scraps from the Pandects were torn from him by unlettered squires,—all the lower, all the middle, and a large part of the female half of the higher class,—were agreed upon the vital question, "Shall this private redress of wrongs continue?" With one voice they answered, "No;" and though for more than a century the baronial power withstood king, commons, and women, it each day grew weaker, and drew nearer to its last death-struggle.

But the use of force in the executive department was a less evil, and a more manageable one, than its use in courts of justice; and for a plain reason; an all-prevailing superstition sanctioned the latter; the judicial combat was an appeal to God, and in those "ages of faith," the masses—not the church—smiled on every such appeal. Nor was it superstition and popular feeling alone which upheld the judgment by force of arms; the interest of the armed aristocracy was no less urgent in its support. So long as a good lance, a trusty steed, and a strong arm could insure a man God's voice in his favor,—that is, so long as might could make right,—all who were trained to the battle-field as their true sphere feared nothing; they dared in any cause meet any one in battle, and the combat was a reference of all questions to strength and skill. How many lonely nights of prayer, meditation, and heart-sick doubt the kindly Louis spent in Egypt, Syria, and France, considering, with full eyes and damp brow, how he might cure the evil he was conscious of, not even the faithful Joinville can reveal to us; they will be numbered in the last day, at the footstool of the Great King. All that we learn is this, that in 1260, not arbitrarily, but as before, by advice and consent of a parliament or council, he forbade peremptorily all use of the "battles of justice" within his own feudal domains, ordaining in their place proof by witnesses. Especially he forbade the battles between a party to the trial and his judge, which in those old feudal

times of force served instead of writs of error and bills of exceptions; and in room thereof, he ordered an appeal or reference of the whole proceedings to the king's own tribunal. These two steps,—the substitution of witnesses in place of an appeal to God by battle between parties, and the creation of an appeal to himself, when either party was dissatisfied with his judge, instead of another call to Heaven,—these two steps, although for the time confined to his own domains, did more to destroy that form of organized barbarism which we call feudalism, than all the contests and victories of Louis the Fat and Philip Augustus. Any baron with a bull's or boar's head could guess who was victor in a listed field; but when he was set down to read papers (leaving out of view the probability that he could not read at all, and must employ a scribe or lawyer to read for him),—when, we say, this Front-de-bœuf was set down to read documents, weigh evidence, split hairs, and logically work out conclusions, his patience could nowise bear the trial, and he was glad enough, like the worthy Mr. Nupkins in Pickwick, to refer the whole matter to a Mr. Jinks, a legist, a lawyer, an antibaron, who strove week by week and hour by hour to effect the great work of modern days,—the subordination of physical, brute force to intellectual, human acumen. Will the hour ever come, when both these shall yield to the power of divine goodness.

Nor was the appeal to the king's court less important than the use of testimony in place of swords and lances. It did, indeed, far more than any thing else to increase the power of the throne, and especially its moral power, its position in the eyes of mankind. We say, more than any thing else; but in this we regard the right to declare a case to be a "royal case" as a form of appeal. There had been for some reigns back a growing disposition to refer certain questions to the king's tribunals, as being regal, not baronial questions. Louis the Ninth gave to this disposition distinct form and value, and, under the influence of the baron-hating legists,

he so ordained, in conformity with the Roman law, that, under given circumstances, almost any case might be referred to his tribunal. This, of course, gave to the king's judgment-seat, and to him, more of influence than any other step ever taken had done. It was, in substance, an appeal of the people from the nobles to the king, and it threw at once the balance of power into the royal hands.

And how did he use this power? Less like a king than a father. Under the oak-trees at Vincennes behold him sitting, —his learned counsellors, Pierre de Fontaines and Geoffroy de Vellettes near by,—waiting rather to arbitrate than judge between those who came to his tribunal. How patiently he listens! How anxiously he examines all proofs! How kindly he points out the middle way, overlooked by both disputants, which will conduct to justice! Can we still wonder that such a man, in such times, was soon to become a saint in the estimation of men? But neither he, nor any other mortal, could perform the whole duty required; and it became necessary to make the occasional sitting of the king's council or parliament, which exercised certain judicial functions, permanent; and to change its composition, by diminishing the feudal and increasing the legal or legist element. Thus everywhere, in the barons' courts, the king's court, and the central parliament, the Roman, legal, organized element began to predominate over the German, feudal, barbaric tendencies, and the foundation-stones of modern society were laid.

But the just soul of Louis and the prejudices of his Romanized counsellors were not arrayed against the old Teutonic barbarism alone, with its endless private wars and judicial duels; they stood equally opposed to the extravagant claims of the Roman hierarchy. Rome had commenced the work of uniting Christendom; had labored, and effectually, against the democracy of nobles, the feudal system; the crusades were the fruit, as chivalry was the flower, of the

union between the German element and the church. But in destroying in some respects feudal disintegration, Rome had left it in other respects untouched; her strength lay in the disagreements of kings and nobles; and where she produced union, it was always in subjection, not to Christianity, but to the Western church. The great plans of Hildebrand hinged upon the ultimate omnipotence on earth of the see of St. Peter; all temporal power must bow to spiritual, and at the head of all spiritual powers in this world was the successor of the great Apostle of the keys. Against this first form of modern unity there had been struggles numberless;—one familiar to all English readers is the contest of Henry Plantagenet and Thomas à Becket;—but the first calm, deliberate, consistent opposition to the centralizing power of the great see was that offered by its truest friend and most honest ally, Louis of France. From 1260 to 1268, step by step was taken by the defender of the liberties of the Gallican church, until, in the year last named, he published his "Pragmatic Sanction," his response, by advice of his wise men, to the voice of the nation, the Magna Charta of the freedom of the church of France, upon whose vague articles the champions of that freedom could write commentaries, and found claims, innumerable. The provisions of this charter are nowise remarkable; the fifth protects France to some extent against the exactions of Rome; but otherwise there was nothing in the Pragmatic Sanction of 1268 which the popes had not time and again countenanced. And yet this ordinance of Louis has been the sheet-anchor of that Gallic independence in ecclesiastical matters which, we suspect, will yet shake off Papacy for Catholicism, and demonstrate that there may be a church free, on the one hand, from sectarianism, on the other, from despotism.

But the legislation of Louis did not stop with antagonism to the feudal system and to the unauthorized claims of the church; it provided for another great grievance of the

Middle Age, that lying and unequal system of coinage which was a poison to honest industry and commercial intercourse. Eighty barons struck money as they pleased, and changed their coinage as the fit took them, or interest prompted. In each barony that coin only was current which the lord had his clipping from. And as alterations of the money were of incalculable evil, and the subjects of each coiner prayed for permanence in the value of each class of pieces, the lords wisely—as the world goes—took pay from the sufferers as a bribe not to vary the standard, and then—in the same spirit of wisdom—varied it as they pleased, and sweated their pounds very nearly to ounces. These things, evil and unjust, did not escape the eye of our conscientious king. As early as 1247, he began his changes by shutting out foreign coin, and making the royal coin everywhere receivable, and everywhere the standard. Having once assumed this ground, he had only to preserve the king's coin at one unvaried value, and all others were forced to bring their moneys to the same value, or they were driven from the market. By these simple means did the good monarch and his long-headed advisers—a sound heart working by a hundred keen wits—cause, for a time at least, uniformity where had been diversity, make it for the interest of the knavish to become honest, and ultimately secure the general prevalence of the issue from the regal mint, as men found that it never changed, while the baronial money-moulders were for ever striving to overreach their neighbour burghers and the thick-headed Flemish merchants. The old gospel had been, as we have said, "Might makes right"; the new commercial glad tidings were fast growing in favor,—the saying, that "Honesty is the best policy." Through thick world-vapors the sun of Christianity comes slowly up.

But among the laws of Louis bearing upon commercial interests were many which would not suit our liberal, free-thinking, free-trade age. His first reforms included, as we

have seen, provisions against the Jews; and in after days, Christian-Jews as well, Lombards and others, came under his condemnation. Why? Partly because of the old Jewish provision against usury; partly because Aristotle and the philosophy of the Middle Age forbade the fertility of money; and partly, also, because, in the days of St. Louis, money was not so used by most of those who paid usury as to make it a fair subject of usury. The Jews and Lombards, when money first took its modern omnipotent position, and could no longer be come at by the strong hand, *were* mostly usurers in the worst sense, and wrung "the forfeit of the bond," though it were the pound of flesh, from the panting, dying debtor, who had at first borrowed but as a means of staving off some earlier leech, some other Shylock.

However, while the feeling of our day will and must protest against Louis's strong provisions in opposition to usury, it is entitled to record its vote in favour of the general tendency of his commercial regulations. They were calculated to raise the trading, and ultimately the laboring classes, to their true position in the eyes of the public; they were incomplete, perhaps evil; but surely they were a step beyond the old iron feudalism; and if our age be, as we claim, in advance of the Middle Age, then was the legislation of St. Louis superior to that of his predecessors. Philip Augustus had done much to break down the baronial power; but in doing this, he warred as chief of the barons, and nothing that he did was calculated any more to abolish the woes and wrongs of feudalism than the subjection of the barons of conquered England by William the Victor and Henry Plantagenet. Louis, on the other hand, unconsciously, through sheer love of right, and aided, urged on, guided, by those who had whetted their intellects on the Pandects and the history of Roman despotism, sapped the foundations of Teutonic law and Papal unity,—two things which he reverenced;—and laid the basis of modern despotism,—a thing

he dreamt not of, and would have hated. England was saved from this eddy of absolutism against individualism, partly by the strong hold which the early Norman monarchs had over the nobles in the midst of a conquered but unquiet people, and partly by the formation of a middle, Cedric-the-Saxon class, which were neither Robin-Hood outlaws, and so short-lived, nor easy Athelstanes, with bull-necks bowed for the yoke. England withstood the transition from feudal lawlessness to modern, industrial law, by the power of her country gentry, and their offspring in the cities and boroughs, —all of good, substantial German make; France—impulsive, mercurial, Celtic, Romanized France—gave up Teuton barbaric freedom, and put on the straight-jacket of revived imperial rule, as easily as her Gallic ancestors had bent to the sword of Cæsar. Rome conquered Gaul, but never Germany; the lawyers of the time of Louis the Ninth—the spiritual progeny of ancient Rome—reconquered the dwellers in the Gallic provinces, but were repulsed by the tough Teutonic Hampdens and Cromwells of the isle of Hengist and Horsa.

And now the great work of Louis was completed; the barons were conquered, the people protected, quiet prevailed through the kingdom, the national church was secured in her liberties. The invalid of Egypt, the sojourner of Syria, had realized his dreams and purposes of good to his own subjects, and once again the early vision of his manhood, the recovery of Palestine, haunted his slumbering and his waking hours. And from that land, so dear to him, came news of greater and greater terror and interest to the Christian world; the Mamelukes were exterminating its inhabitants. In 1267, the king of France convened his nobles at Paris. He sent to Joinville to be present; but the worthy seneschal excused himself, on the ground that he had an ague; the king, however, would not listen to excuses, and assuring him he had physicians who could cure any ague, prevailed on his old

comrade to appear at the capital, though why he was summoned he knew not. On the twenty-fifth of May, however, all was explained. In the great hall of the Louvre, Louis, bearing the Crown of Thorns in his reverent hands, met his nobles, and announced to them his purposes. Weak almost to fainting, too weak to sit a horse or ride even in a carriage, worn to a shade by fasts, penances, and vigils,—but with an eye expressive of the undaunted and tireless soul that upheld him, he, first of all, resumed the cross; then his three sons bound themselves to the crusade; and then, unable to resist so firm and self-forgetting a spirit, lords and knights, many a one. But though all admired the disinterested heroism of Louis, not a few blamed his rashness. The pope tried to dissuade him; Joinville opposed him; his councillors pointed out the danger to his kingdom; his family wept at the prospect of his loss; his clergy grumbled at the idea of increased taxes. But the hero of the cross had not taken his resolve rashly, and no slight obstacles could stop him; he felt his end drawing near, and his heart ached to beat its last in the service of Jesus. Through three years, calmly, consistently, and with a prescience that he should not return, he prepared all within and without his kingdom for his departure; provided for his children; began his paper of instructions to his successor; and named those who were to act as regents. At length the appointed time came; with bare feet he made his last visits to Notre Dame, to the tomb of St. Denis, assumed the staff and wallet of the pilgrim, and bowed before the holy relics in adoration.

On the sixteenth of March, 1270, he left Paris for the seashore; on the first of July, he sailed from France. The sad, sad story of this his last earthly doing need not be here repeated. Led, we scarce know why, to sail to Tunis; without wishing it, involved in an unjust and useless war with the Moors; delayed by the tardiness of his able but abominable brother, Charles of Anjou; and seeing daily his army

melt away beneath the heat of the climate, thirst, hunger, pestilence, and the Moorish arrows,—it was but too certain that the last of the crusaders was drawing near his end. From his resting-place, the castle of Carthage, Louis could look out upon the burning sands of the shore, the molten sea, the sky of burnished brass; he could watch the southern winds sweep the sharp dust of the desert into the camp of his followers; could behold the African horsemen hovering around his devoted troops, destroying every straggler. Leaning with his thin, feeble hands upon the battlements, he looked toward the bay where floated the ship in which his favorite son lay sick, stricken by the plague which was consuming so many; which even then had fastened upon the king's own blood. With tearful, anxious, yet patient and confiding eyes, he watched the vessel just moving in the roll of the bay under that August sun, and prayed to God and Jesus that his son might live, and his brother quickly come. His prayer was not granted; on the third of August, the Count of Nevers died; on the eleventh, his death was told to his father; on the morning of the twenty-fifth, the fleet of Charles of Anjou had not yet appeared. Meanwhile the poison in the veins of the monarch had through twenty-one days been working, and none yet knew whether he would live or die. From his sick-bed he had sent messages of comfort and resignation to the sick around him; on his bed of weakness and pain he had finished those advices to his successor which should be engraved in adamant, and given to every king and king's son to grow better by. "Hold to justice," such are some of his words,—"be inflexible and true, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, and sustain the cause of the poor until justice be done him. If any one has to do with thee, be for him and against thyself. Beware of beginning war, ... and if it be begun, spare the church and the innocent. Appease all quarrels that thou canst.

Procure good officers, and see that they do their duty. Keep thy expenses within bounds."

So passed the closing hours of the French king. During the night of the twenty-fourth of August, he asked to be taken from his bed, and laid, unworthy sinner that he was, on a bed of ashes. His request was complied with; and so he lay, his hands crossed, his eyes fixed upon the suffering form of his Saviour, until some three hours after the next midday. Those who sat by, and saw how breath failed him, drew the curtains of the window to admit the slight breeze that curled the waters of the bay, and looked out, carelessly, into the August afternoon. Afar off, a fleet was just coming in sight, the long-expected fleet of Anjou. With beating hearts they knelt and told the royal invalid on his couch of ashes; but his ear was deaf, his eye lifeless, his jaw fallen.

Make ready your spices to embalm his body, poor, thread-bare garment that it is! And issue your bulls to embalm his memory as a saint, for as such already his name is aromatic in the mouths of men! Truly a saint; not faultless, —neither was Peter; not intellectually omnipotent,—neither was John; not an overturner,—he would render Cæsar's dues to Cæsar, God's to God. We have said he was no radical; perhaps we erred; there is no truly radical, root-reaching reform that does not flow from the infinite in man's heart and conscience; the finite, in his mind, is much, but always superficial, not radical. Glory to Louis the Ninth! glory to all who have reformed as their Master did, from the centre outward! Let him be Saint Louis, the Holy Louis, the divinely enlightened Louis! And let us of Protestantism weep that it is so hard for us to raise our true and noble men, our heroes and earthly saviours, our Eliots, Hampdens, and Cromwells, Washingtons and Jays, into saints also, for ever to be revered.

PETER THE GREAT.*

ONE day, in the year 1697, the great Duke of Marlborough happened to be in the village of Saardam. He visited the dockyard of one Mynheer Calf, a rich ship-builder, and was struck with the appearance of a journeyman at work there. He was a large, powerful man, dressed in a red woollen shirt and duck trowsers, with a sailor's hat, and seated, with an adze in his hand, upon a rough log of timber which lay on the ground. The man's features were bold and regular, his dark brown hair fell in natural curls about his neck, his complexion was strong and ruddy, with veins somewhat distended, indicating an ardent temperament and more luxurious habits than comported with his station; and his dark, keen eye glanced from one object to another with remarkable restlessness. He was engaged in earnest conversation with some strangers, whose remarks he occasionally interrupted, while he rapidly addressed them in a guttural but not unmusical voice. As he became occasionally excited in conversation, his features twitched convulsively, the blood rushed to his forehead, his arms were tossed about with extreme violence of gesticulation,

* *La Russie en* 1839. Par le MARQUIS DE CUSTINE. 4 vols. Seconde Edition, revue, corrigée, et augmentée. Paris. 1843.

A Memoir of the Life of Peter the Great. By JOHN BARROW, Esq., Secretary to the Admiralty. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1839.

and he seemed constantly upon the point of giving way to some explosion of passion, or else of falling into a fit of catalepsy. His companions, however, did not appear alarmed by his vehemence, although they seemed to treat him with remarkable deference; and, after a short time, his distorted features would resume their symmetry and agreeable expression, his momentary frenzy would subside, and a bright smile would light up his whole countenance.

The Duke inquired the name of this workman, and was told it was one Pieter Baas, a foreign journeyman of remarkable mechanical abilities and great industry. Approaching, he entered into some slight conversation with him upon matters pertaining to his craft. While they were conversing, a stranger of foreign mien and costume appeared, holding a voluminous letter in his hand; the workman started up, snatched it from his hand, tore off the seals and greedily devoured its contents, while the stately Marlborough walked away unnoticed. The Duke was well aware that, in this thin disguise, he saw the Czar of Muscovy. Pieter Baas, or Boss Peter, or Master Peter, was Peter the despot of all the Russias; a man who, having just found himself the undisputed proprietor of a quarter of the globe with all its inhabitants, had opened his eyes to the responsibilities of his position, and had voluntarily descended from his throne for the noble purpose of qualifying himself to reascend it.

The empire of Russia, at this moment more than twice as large as Europe, having a considerable extent of seacoasts, with flourishing commercial havens both upon the Baltic and the Black seas, and a chain of internal communication, by canal and river, connecting them both with the Caspian and the Volga, was, at the accession of Peter the First, of quite sufficient dimensions for any reasonable monarch's ambition, but of most unfortunate geographical position. Shut off from civilized Western Europe by vast and thinly peopled forests and plains, having for neighbours only the sledded

Polack, the Turk, the Persian, and the Chinese, and touching nowhere upon the ocean, that great highway of civilization, —the ancient empire of the Czars seemed always in a state of suffocation. Remote from the sea, it was a mammoth without lungs, incapable of performing the functions belonging to its vast organization, and presenting to the world the appearance of a huge, incomplete, and inert mass, waiting the advent of some new Prometheus to inspire it with life and light.

Its capital, the *bizarre* and fantastic Moscow, with its vast, turreted, and venerable Kremlin,—its countless churches, with their flashing spires and clustering and turbaned minarets, glittering in green, purple, and gold,—its mosques, with the cross supplanting the crescent,—its streets swarming with bearded merchants and ferocious Janizaries, while its female population were immured and invisible,—was a true type of the empire, rather Asiatic than European, and yet compounded of both.

The government, too, was far more Oriental than European in its character. The Normans had, to be sure, in the eleventh century, taken possession of the Russian government with the same gentlemanlike effrontery with which, at about the same time, they had seated themselves upon every throne in Europe; and the crown of Ruric had been transmitted like the other European crowns for many generations, till it descended through a female branch upon the head of the Romanoffs, the ancestors of Peter and the present imperial family. But though there might be said to be an established dynasty, the succession to the throne was controlled by the Strelitzes, the licentious and ungovernable soldiery of the capital, as much as the Turkish or Roman empire by the Janizaries or Pretorians; and the history of the government was but a series of palace-revolutions, in which the sovereign, the tool alternately of the priesthood and the body-guard, was elevated, deposed, or strangled,

according to the prevalence of different factions in the capital. The government was, in fact, as it has been epigrammatically characterized, "a despotism tempered by assassination."

The father of Peter the First, Alexis Michaelovitz, had indeed projected reforms in various departments of the government. He seems to have been, to a certain extent, aware of the capacity of his empire, and to have had some faint glimmerings of the responsibility which weighed upon him, as the inheritor of this vast hereditary estate. He undertook certain revisions of the laws, if the mass of contradictory and capricious edicts which formed the code deserve that name; and his attention had particularly directed itself to the condition of the army and the church. Upon his death, in 1677, he left two sons, Theodore and John, and four daughters, by his first wife; besides one son, Peter, born in 1672, and one daughter, Natalia, by the second wife, of the house of Narischkin. The eldest son, Theodore, succeeded, whose administration was directed by his sister, the ambitious and intriguing princess Sophia, assisted by her paramour Galitzin. Theodore died in 1682, having named his half-brother Peter as his successor, to the exclusion of his own brother John, who was almost an idiot. Sophia, who, in the fitful and perilous history of Peter's boyhood, seems like the wicked fairy in so many Eastern fables, whose mission is constantly to perplex, and, if possible, destroy, the virtuous young prince, who, however, struggles manfully against her enchantments and her hosts of allies, and comes out triumphant at last,—Sophia, assisted by Couvanski, general of the Strelitzes, excited a tumult in the capital. Artfully inflaming the passions of the soldiery, she directed their violence against all those who stood between her and the power she aimed at; many of the Narischkin family (the maternal relatives of Peter), with their adherents, were butchered with wholesale ferocity, many crown-officers were put to death, and the princess at length succeeded in pro-

claiming the idiot John and the infant Peter as joint Czars, and herself as regent.

From this time forth, Sophia, having the reins of government securely in her hands, took particular care to surround the youthful Peter with the worst influences. She exposed him systematically to temptation, she placed about him the most depraved and licentious associates, and seems to have encouraged the germination of every vicious propensity with the most fostering care. In 1689, during the absence of Prince Galitzin upon his second unsuccessful invasion of the Crimea, Peter was married, at the age of seventeen, through the influence of a faction hostile to Sophia, to a young lady of the Lapouchin family. After the return of Galitzin, a desperate revolt of the Strelitzes was concerted between their general, and Sophia and Galitzin, whose object was to seize and murder Peter. He saved himself for the second time in the convent of the Trinity,—the usual place of refuge when the court was beleaguered, as was not unusual, by the Janizaries,—assembled around him those of the boyards and the soldiers who were attached to him, and, with the personal bravery and promptness which have descended like an heirloom in his family, defeated the conspirators at a blow, banished Galitzin to Siberia, and locked up Sophia in a convent, where she remained till her death, fifteen years afterwards. His brother John remained nominally as joint Czar till his death in 1696.

In less than a year from this time, Peter made the acquaintance of a very remarkable man, to whom, more than to any other, Russia seems to have been indebted for the first impulse towards civilization. Happening one day to be dining at the house of the Danish minister, he was pleased with the manners and conversation of his Excellency's private secretary, This was a certain youthful Genevese adventurer, named Lefort. He had been educated for the mercantile profession and placed in a counting-house; but being of an

adventurous disposition, with decided military tastes and talents, he had enlisted as a volunteer, and served with some distinction in the Low Countries. Still following his campaigning inclinations, he enlisted under a certain Colonel Verstin, who had been commissioned by the Czar Alexis to pick up some German recruits, and followed him to Archangel. Arriving there, he found that the death of Alexis had left no demand for the services either of himself or the colonel, and after escaping with difficulty transportation to Siberia, with which he seems to have been threatened for no particular reason, he followed his destiny to Moscow, where he found employment under the Danish envoy De Horn, and soon after was introduced to the Czar.

It was this young adventurer, a man of no extraordinary acquirements, but one who had had the advantage of a European education, and the genius to know its value and to reap its full benefit,—a man of wonderful power of observation, in whom intuition took the place of experience, and who possessed the rare faculty of impressing himself upon other minds with that genial warmth and force which render the impression indelible,—it was this truant Genevese clerk, who planted the first seeds in the fertile, but then utterly fallow, mind of the Czar. Geniality and sympathy were striking characteristics of both minds, and they seem to have united by a kind of elective affinity, from the first instant they were placed in neighbourhood of each other.

It was from Lefort that the Czar first learned the great superiority of the disciplined troops of Western Europe over the licentious and anarchical soldiery of Russia. It was in concert with Lefort, that he conceived on the instant the daring plan of annihilating the Strelitzes, the body-guard which had set up and deposed the monarchs,—a plan that would have inevitably cost a less sagacious and vigorous prince his throne and life, and which he silently and cautiously matured, till, as we shall have occasion to relate, it was suc-

cessfully executed. Almost immediately after his acquaintance with Lefort, he formed a regiment upon the European plan, which was to be the germ of the reformed army which he contemplated. This regiment was called the Preobrazinski body-guard, from the name of the palace, and Lefort was appointed its colonel, while the Czar entered himself as drummer.

It was to Lefort, also, that the Czar was, about this time, indebted for the acquaintance of the celebrated Menzikoff. This was another adventurer, who had great influence upon the fortunes of the empire, who sprang from the very humblest origin, and who seemed, like Lefort, to have been guided from afar by the finger of Providence to become a fit instrument to carry out the plans of Peter. The son of miserable parents upon the banks of the Volga, not even taught to read or write, Menzikoff sought his fortune in Moscow, and, at the age of fourteen, became apprentice to a pastry-cook, and earned his living as an itinerant vender of cakes and pies; these he offered about the streets, recommending them in ditties of his own composing, which he sang in a very sweet voice. While engaged in this humble occupation, he happened one day to attract the attention of Lefort, who entered into some little conversation with him. The Swiss volunteer, who had so lately expanded into the general and admiral of Muscovy, could hardly dream, nor did he live long enough to learn, that, in that fair-haired, bare-footed, sweet-voiced boy, the future prince of the empire, general, governor, regent, and almost autocrat, stood disguised before him. There really seems something inexpressibly romantic in the accidental and strange manner, in which the chief actors in the great drama of Peter's career seem to have been selected, and to have received their several parts from the great hand of fate. The youthful Menzikoff was presented by Lefort to the Czar, who was pleased with his appearance and vivacity, and made him his page, and, soon afterwards, his favorite and confidant.

At about the same time that Peter commenced his model regiment, he had also commenced building some vessels at Veroneje, with which he had already formed the design of sailing down the Don and conquering Azoff, the key to the Black Sea, from the Turks.

Nothing indicated the true instinct of Peter's genius more decidedly than the constancy with which he cultivated a love for maritime affairs. He is said in infancy to have had an almost insane fear of water; but as there was never any special reason assigned for it, this was probably invented to make his naval progress appear more remarkable. At all events, he seems very soon to have conquered his hydrophobia, and in his boyhood appears to have found his chief amusement in paddling about the river Yausa, which passes through Moscow, in a little skiff built by a Dutchman, which had attracted his attention as being capable, unlike the flat-bottomed scows, which were the only boats with which he had been previously familiar, of sailing against the wind. Having solved the mystery of the keel, he became passionately fond of the sport, and, not satisfied with the navigation of the Yausa, nor of the lake Peipus, upon which he amused himself for a time, he could not rest till he had proceeded to Archangel, where he purchased and manned a vessel, in which he took a cruise or two upon the Frozen Ocean as far as Ponoi, upon the coast of Lapland.

Peter understood thoroughly the position of his empire, the moment he came to the throne. Previous Czars had issued a multiplicity of edicts, forbidding their subjects to go out of the empire. Peter saw that the great trouble was, that they could not get out. Both the natural gates of his realm were locked upon him, and the keys were in the hands of his enemies. When we look at the map of Russia now, we do not sufficiently appreciate the difficulties of Peter's position at his accession. To do so is to appreciate his genius and the strength of his will. While paddling in his little

skiff on the Yausa, he had already determined that this great inland empire of his, whose inhabitants had never seen or heard of the ocean, should become a maritime power. He saw that without seaports it could never be redeemed from its barbarism, and he was resolved to exchange its mongrel Orientalism for European civilization. Accordingly, before he had been within five hundred miles of blue water, he made himself a sailor, and at the same time formed the plan, which he pursued with iron pertinacity to its completion, of conquering the Baltic from the Swede, and the Euxine from the Turk. Fully to see and appreciate the necessity of this measure was, in the young, neglected barbarian prince, a great indication of genius; but the resolution to set about and accomplish this mighty scheme in the face of ten thousand obstacles constituted him a hero. He was, in fact, one of those few characters whose existence has had a considerable influence upon history. If he had not lived, Russia would very probably have been at the present moment one great Wallachia or Moldavia,—a vast wilderness, peopled by the same uncouth barbarians who even now constitute the mass of its population, and governed by a struggling, brawling, confused mob of unlettered boyards, knavish priests, and cut-throat Janizaries.

It was not so trifling a task as it may now appear, for Russia to conquer Sweden and the Sublime Porte. On the contrary, Sweden was so vastly superior in the scale of civilization, and her disciplined troops, trained for a century upon the renowned battle-fields of Europe, with a young monarch at their head who loved war as other youths love a mistress, gave her such a decided military preponderance, that she looked upon Russia with contempt. The Ottoman empire, too, was, at that time, not the rickety, decrepit state which it now is, holding itself up, like the cabman's horse, only by being kept in the shafts, and ready to drop the first moment its foreign master stops whipping; on the contrary, in the

very year in which Peter inherited the empire from his brother Theodore, 200,000 Turks besieged Vienna, and drove the Emperor Leopold in dismay from his capital. Although the downfall of the Porte may be dated from the result of that memorable campaign, yet the Sultan was then a vastly more powerful potentate than the Czar, and the project to snatch from him the citadel of Azoff, the key of the Black Sea, was one of unparalleled audacity.

But Peter had already matured the project, and was determined to execute it. He required seaports, and, having none, he determined to seize those of his neighbours. Like the "king of Bohemia with his seven castles," he was the "most unfortunate man in the world, because, having the greatest passion for navigation and all sorts of sea affairs, he had never a seaport in all his dominions." Without stopping, however, like Corporal Trim, to argue the point in casuistry, whether—Russia, like Bohemia, being an inland country—it would be consistent with divine benevolence for the ocean to inundate his neighbour's territory in order to accommodate him, he took a more expeditious method. Preferring to go to the ocean, rather than wait for the ocean to come to him, in 1695 he sailed down the Don with his vessels, and struck his first blow at Azoff. His campaign was unsuccessful, through the treachery and desertion of an artillery officer, named Jacob; but as the Czar through life possessed the happy faculty of never knowing when he was beaten, he renewed his attack the next year, and carried the place with the most brilliant success. The key of the Palus Mæotis was thus in his hands, and he returned in triumph to Moscow, where he levied large sums upon the nobility and clergy, to build and sustain a fleet upon the waters he had conquered, to drive the Tartars from the Crimea, and to open and sustain a communication with Persia, through Circassia and Georgia.

Thus the first point was gained, and his foot at last touched the ocean. Moreover, the Tartars of the Crimea, who had

been from time immemorial the pest of Russia,—a horde of savages, who "said their prayers but once a year, and then to a dead horse," and who had yet compelled the Muscovites to pay them an annual tribute, and had inserted in their last articles of peace the ignominious conditions, that "the Czar should hold the stirrup of their Khan, and feed his horse with oats out of his cap, if they should chance at any time to meet," —these savages were humbled at a blow, and scourged into insignificance by the master hand of Peter.

A year or two before the capture of Azoff, Peter had repudiated his wife. Various pretexts, such as infidelity and jealousy, have been assigned for the step; among others, the enmity of Menzikoff, whom she had incensed by the accusation that he had taken her husband to visit lewd women, who had formerly been his customers for pies; but the real reason was, that, like every one else connected with the great reformer, she opposed herself with the most besotted bigotry to all his plans. She was under the influence of the priests, and the priests, of course, opposed him. Unfortunately, the Czar left his son Alexis in the charge of the mother, a mistake, which, as we shall see, occasioned infinite disaster.

Peter, having secured himself a seaport, sent a number of young Russians to study the arts of civilized life in Holland, Italy, and Germany; but being convinced that he must do every thing for himself, and set the example to his subjects, he resolved to descend from his throne, and go to Holland to perfect himself in the arts, and particularly to acquire a thorough practical knowledge of maritime affairs.

Having been hitherto unrepresented in any European court, he fitted out a splendid embassy extraordinary to the States-General of Holland,—Lefort, Golownin, Voristzin, and Menzikoff being the plenipotentiaries, while the Czar accompanied them *incognito*, as *attaché* to the mission. The embassy proceeds through Esthonia and Livonia, visits Riga, —where the Swedish governor, D'Alberg, refuses permission

to visit the fortifications, an indignity which Peter resolves to punish severely,—and, proceeding through Prussia, is received with great pomp by the king, at Königsberg. Here the Germans and Russians, "most potent at pottery," meet each other with exuberant demonstrations of friendship, and there is much carousing and hard drinking. At this place, Peter leaves the embassy, travels privately and with great rapidity to Holland, and never rests till he has established himself as a journeyman in the dockyard of Mynheer Calf. From a seafaring man, named Kist, whom he had known in Archangel, he hires lodgings, consisting of a small room and kitchen, and a garret above them, and immediately commences a laborious and practical devotion to the trade which he had determined to acquire. The Czar soon became a most accomplished ship-builder. His first essay was upon a small yacht, which he purchased and refitted upon his arrival, and in which he spent all his leisure moments, sailing about in the harbour, visiting the vessels in port, and astonishing the phlegmatic Dutchmen by the agility with which he flew about among the shipping. Before his departure, he laid down and built, from his own draught and model, a sixty-gun ship, as much of the carpentry of which he worked with his own hands, and which was declared by many competent judges to be an admirable specimen of naval architecture.

But besides his proficiency so rapidly acquired in all maritime matters, he made considerable progress in civil engineering, mathematics, and the science of fortification, besides completely mastering the Dutch language, and acquiring the miscellaneous accomplishments of tooth-drawing, blood-letting, and tapping for the dropsy. He was indefatigable in visiting every public institution, charitable, literary, or scientific, in examining the manufacturing establishments, the corn-mills, saw-mills, paper-mills, oil-factories, all of which he studied practically, with the view of immediately introducing these branches of industry into his own dominions;

and before leaving Holland, he spent some time at Texel, solely for the purpose of examining the whale-ships, and qualifying himself to instruct his subjects in this pursuit after his return. "*Wat is dat? Dat wil il zien,*" was his eternal exclamation to the quiet Hollanders, who looked with profound astonishment at this boisterous foreign prince, in carpenter's disguise, flying round like a harlequin, swinging his stick over the backs of those who stood in his way, making strange grimaces, and rushing from one object to another with a restless activity of body and mind which seemed incomprehensible. He devoured every possible morsel of knowledge with unexampled voracity; but the sequel proved that his mind had an ostrich-like digestion as well as appetite. The seeds which he collected in Holland, Germany, and England bore a rich harvest in the Scythian wildernesses, where his hand planted them on his return. Having spent about nine months in the Netherlands, he left that country for England.

His purpose in visiting England was principally to examine her navy-yards, dockyards, and maritime establishments, and to acquire some practical knowledge of English naval architecture. He did not design to work in the dockyards, but he preserved his *incognito*, although received with great attention by King William, who furthered all his plans to the utmost, and deputed the Marquis of Caermarthen, with whom the Czar became very intimate, to minister to all his wants during his residence in England. He was first lodged in York Buildings; but afterwards, in order to be near the sea, he took possession of a house called Sayes Court, belonging to the celebrated John Evelyn, "with a back door into the king's yard, at Deptford;" there, says an old writer, "he would often take up the carpenters' tools, and work with them; and he frequently conversed with the builders, who showed him their draughts, and the methods of laying down, by proportion, any ship or vessel."

It is amusing to observe the contempt with which the servant of the gentle, pastoral Evelyn writes to his master concerning his imperial tenant, and the depredations and desecrations committed upon his "most boscaresque grounds." "There is a house full of people," he says, "right nasty. The Czar lies next your library, and dines in the parlour next your study. He dines at ten o'clock, and six at night; is very seldom at home a whole day; very often in the king's yard, or by water, dressed in several dresses. The best parlour is pretty clean for the king to be entertained in." Moreover, in the garden at Sayes Court, there was, to use Evelyn's own language, "a glorious and refreshing object, an impregnable hedge of about four hundred feet in length, nine feet high, and five feet in diameter, at any time of the year glittering with its armed and variegated leaves; the taller standards, at orderly distances, blushing with their natural coral;" and through this "glorious and refreshing object," the Czar amused himself by trundling a wheelbarrow every morning for the sake of the exercise!

He visited the hospitals, and examined most of the public institutions in England; and particularly directed his attention towards acquiring information in engineering, and collecting a body of skilful engineers and artificers to carry on the great project, which he had already matured, of opening an artificial communication, by locks and canals, between the Volga, the Don, and the Caspian;—a design, by the way, which was denounced by the clergy and nobility of his empire, "as a piece of impiety, being to turn the streams one way, which Providence had directed another." His evenings were generally spent with the Marquis Caermarthen, with pipes, beer, and brandy, at a tavern near Tower Hill, which is still called the "Czar of Muscovy."

During his stay in England, he went to see the University of Oxford, and visited many of the cathedrals and churches, and "had also the curiosity to view the Quakers and other

Dissenters at their meeting-houses in the time of service." In this connexion it is impossible not to quote the egregiously foolish remarks of Bishop Burnet, in his "History of his own Times."

"I waited upon him often," says the bishop, "and was ordered, both by the king and the archbishop, to attend upon him, and to offer him such information as to our religion and constitution as he might be willing to receive. I had good interpreters, so I had much free discourse with him. He is a man of a very hot temper, soon influenced, and very brutal in his passion; he raises his natual heat by drinking much brandy, which he rectifies himself with great application; he is subject to convulsive motions all over his body, and his head seems to be affected with these. He wants not capacity, and has a larger measure of knowledge than might be expected from his education, which was very indifferent; a want of judgment, with an instability of temper, appears in him but too often and too evidently. He is mechanically turned, and seems designed by nature rather *to be a ship-carpenter than a great prince.* This was his chief study and exercise while he staid here; he wrought much with his own hands, and made all about him work at the models of ships. He told me he designed a great fleet at Azoff, and with it to attack the Turkish empire; but he did not seem capable of conducting so great a design, though his conduct in his wars since this has discovered a greater genius in him than appeared at that time. He was desirous to understand our doctrine, but he did not seem *disposed to mend matters in Muscovy.* He was, indeed, resolved to encourage learning, and to polish his people by sending some of them to travel in other countries, and to draw strangers to come and live among them. He seemed apprehensive still of his sister's intrigues. There is a mixture both of passion and severity in his temper. He is resolute, but understands little of war, and seemed not at all inquisitive in that way. After I had seen him often, and had conversed much with him, I could not but adore the depth of the providence of God, that had raised up such a furious man to so absolute an authority over so great a part of the world."—*History of his own Times*, vol. ii., pp. 221, 222.

The complacency with which the prelate speaks of this "furious man," "designed by nature rather to be a ship-carpenter than a great prince," who "did not seem disposed to mend matters in Muscovy," is excessively ludicrous. Here

was a youth of twenty-five, who had seen with a glance the absolute necessity of opening for his empire a pathway to the ocean, and had secured that pathway by a blow, and who now, revolving in his mind the most daring schemes of conquest over martial neighbours, and vast projects of internal improvement for his domains, had gone forth in mask and domino from his barbarous citadel, not for a holyday pastime, but to acquire the arts of war and peace, and, like a modern Cadmus, to transplant from older regions the seeds of civilization to the barbarous wildernesses of his realm. Here was a crowned monarch, born in the purple, and, in the very heyday of his youth, exchanging his diadem and sceptre for the tools of a shipwright; while, at the same time, in his capacious brain his vast future lay as clearly imaged, and his great projects already to his imagination appeared as palpable as, long years afterwards, when completed, they became to the observation of the world; and yet, upon the whole, the churchman thought him "not disposed to mend matters in Muscovy," and rather fitted by nature "to be a ship-carpenter than a great prince."

The Czar, before his departure from England, engaged a large number of scientific persons, at the head of whom was Ferguson, the engineer, to accompany him to Russia, to be employed upon the various works of internal improvement already projected. To all these persons he promised liberal salaries, which were never paid, and perfect liberty to depart when they chose, "with crowns for convoy put into their purse;" although, in the sequel, the poor devils never got a ruble for their pains, and those who escaped assassination by some jealous Russian or other, and were able to find their way "bootless home, and weather-beaten back," after a few profitless years spent upon the Czar's sluices and bridges, were to be considered fortunate.

One of the disadvantages, we suppose, of one man's owning a whole quarter of the globe and all its inhabitants, is a ter-

dency to think lightly of human obligations. It is useless to occupy one's mind with engagements that no human power can enforce. The artificers, being there, might accomplish their part of the Czar's mission to civilize, or at least to Europeanize, Russia. This was matter of consequence to the world; their salaries were of no importance to any body but themselves. It is odd, that these persons were the first to introduce into Russia the science of reckoning by Arabic numerals, accounts having been formerly kept (and, indeed, being still kept by all shop-keepers and retail dealers) by means of balls upon a string, as billiards are marked in America. For the Czar to have introduced an improved method of account-keeping, by means of the very men with whom he intended to keep no account at all, seems a superfluous piece of irony; but so it was. He had, however, a nicer notion of what was due from one potentate to another; for, upon taking his departure from England, he took from his breeches pocket a ruby wrapped in brown paper, worth about £10,000, and presented it to King William. He also, in return for the agreeable hours passed with Lord Caermarthen at the "Czar of Muscovy" upon Tower-hill, presented that nobleman with the right to license every hogshead of tobacco exported to Russia by an English company, who had paid him £15,000 for the monopoly, and to charge five shillings for each license.

Upon his return through Vienna, where he was entertained with great pomp, he received news of an insurrection which had broken out in Moscow, but which had already been suppressed by the energy of General Patrick Gordon. This news induced him to give up his intended visit to Italy, and to hasten back to his capital. He found, upon his arrival, that the Strelitzes, who, instigated of course by the Princess Sophia, were the authors of the revolt, had been defeated, and the ringleaders imprisoned. He immediately hung up

three or four of them in front of Sophia's window, had half a dozen more hung and quartered, and a few more broken upon the wheel. Under the circumstances, this was quite as little as a Czar who respected himself, and who proposed to remain Czar, could have done by way of retaliation upon a body of men as dangerous as these Strelitzes.

It is not singular, however, that at that day, when the Czar of Muscovy was looked upon by Western Europeans as an Ogre who habitually breakfasted upon his subjects, these examples of wholesome severity were magnified into the most improbable fables. Korb, the secretary of the Austrian legation at Moscow, entertained his sovereign with minute details of several banquets given by Peter to the nobility and diplomatic corps, at every one of which several dozen Strelitzes were decapitated in the dining-room. He tells of one select dinner-party in particular, in which the Czar chopped off the heads of twenty with his own hands, washing down each head with a bumper of brandy; and then obliging Lefort, and several of the judges, and some of the foreign ministers, to try their hand at the sport. In short, if we could believe contemporary memorialists, the Strelitzes were kept in preserves like pheasants, and a grand *battue* was given once a week by the Czar to his particular friends, in which he who bagged the most game was sure to recommend himself most to the autocrat. If we were to rely upon the general tone of contemporary history, or to place any credence in circumstantial and statistical details of persons having facts within their reach, we should believe that there never was so much fun in Moscow as while these Strelitzes lasted. Residents there stated, that two thousand of them were executed in all, including those made away with by the Czar and the *dilletanti*.

Perhaps our readers may think that we are exaggerating. We can assure them that the flippancy is not ours, but his-

tory's. We should have dwelt less upon the topic, had not our friend the Marquis de Custine reproduced some of these fables with such imperturbable gravity.*

At all events, the Strelitzes were entirely crushed by these vigorous measures; and from cutting off the heads of the Janizaries, the Czar now found leisure to cut off the petticoats and beards of his subjects. The great cause of complaint which De Custine makes against Peter is, that he sought to improve his country by importing the seeds of civilization from the older countries of Western Europe. He would have preferred to have had the Russians, being a Sclavonic race, civilized as it were Sclavonically. What this process is, and where it has been successfully put into operation, he does not inform us. As we read the history of the

* On lit dans M. de Ségur les faits suivants:—"Pierre, lui même a interrogé ces criminels (les Strélitz) par la torture; puis à l'imitation d'Iwan le Tyran, il se fait leur juge, leur bourreau; il force ses nobles, restés fidèles, à trancher les têtes des nobles coupables, qu'ils viennent de condamner. Le cruel, du haut de son trône assiste d'un œil sec à ces exécutions; il fait plus, il mêle aux joies des festins l'horreur des supplices. Ivre de vin et de sang, le verre d'une main, la hache de l'autre en une seule heure, vingt libations successives marquent la chute de vingt têtes de Strélitz, qu'il abat à ses pieds, en s'enorgueillissant de son horrible adresse. L'année d'après, le contre coup, soit du soulèvement de ses Janissaires, soit de l'atrocité de leur supplice, retentit au loin dans l'Empire, et d'autres revoltes eclatent. Quatre-vingt Strélitz, chargés de chaînes, sont traînés d'Azoff à Moscou, et leures têtes, qu'un boyard tient successivement par les cheveux,tombent encore sous la hache du Czar."—*Hist. de Russie et de Pierre le Grand.* par M. le Général Comte de Ségur.—*La Russie en* 1839, par le Marquis de Custine, I. 306.

"Mais tandis que ce grand précepteur de son peuple enseignait si bien la civilité puérile aux boyards et aux marchands de Moscou, il s'abaissait lui même à la pratique des métiers les plus vils, à commencer par celui de bourreau; on lui a vu couper vingt têtes de sa main dans une soirée; et on l'a entendu se vanter de son adresse à ce métier, qu'il exerça avec une rare férocité lorsequ'il eut triomphé des coupables, mais encore plus malheureux Strélitz," etc.— De Custine, III. 330.

world, it seems to us that the arts have circled the earth, successively implanting themselves in different countries at different epochs, and producing different varieties of intellectual, moral, and physical fruit, corresponding to the myriad influences exercised upon the seed. At all events, if Peter made a mistake in importing the germs of ancient culture from more favoured lands, it was a mistake he made in common with Cadmus, and Cecrops, and Theseus, and other semi-fabulous personages,—with Solon, and Lycurgus, and Pythagoras, in less crepuscular times.

Right or wrong, however, Peter was determined to *Occidentalize* his empire. The darling wish of his heart was to place himself upon the seashore, in order the more easily to Europeanize his country. In the mean time, and while awaiting a good opportunity for the "reannexation" of Ingria, Esthonia, and Livonia, provinces which had several centuries before belonged to the Russian crown, but had been ceded to, and possessed by, Sweden for ages, he began to denationalize his subjects, by putting a tax upon their beards and their petticoats. Strange to say, his subjects were so much more patriotic than their master, that the tax became very productive. Peter increased his revenue, but could not diminish the beards or petticoats. He was obliged to resort to force, and by "entertaining a score or two of tailors and barbers" at each gate of Moscow, whose business it was to fasten upon every man who entered, and to "cut his petticoats all round about," as well as his whiskers, he at last succeeded in humanizing their costume;—a process highly offensive, and which caused the clergy, who naturally favored the Russian nationality upon which they were fattened, to denounce him as Antichrist. At the same time, he altered the commencement of the year from the 1st of September to the 1st of January, much to the astonishment of his subjects, who wondered that the Czar could change the course of the sun. He also instituted assemblies for the

encouragement of social intercourse between the sexes. But his most important undertakings were the building, under his immediate superintendence, assisted by the English officers whom he had brought with him, of a large fleet upon the Don, and the junction of that river with the Volga. About this time, he met with an irreparable loss in the death of Lefort, who perished at the early age of forty-six. Peter was profoundly afflicted by this event, and honored his remains with magnificent obsequies.

Both coasts of the gulf of Finland, together with both banks of the river Neva, up to the lake Ladoga, had been long, and were still, in possession of the Swedes. These frozen morasses were not a tempting site for a metropolis, certainly; particularly when they happened to be in the possession of the most warlike nation of Europe, governed by the most warlike monarch, as the sequel proved, that had ever sat upon its throne. Still, Peter had determined to take possession of that coast, and already in imagination had built his capital upon those dreary solitudes, peopled only by the elk, the wolf, and the bear. This man, more than any one perhaps that ever lived, was an illustration of the power of volition. He always settled in his own mind exactly what he wanted, and then put on his wishing-cap. With him, to will was to have. Obstacles he took as a matter of course. It never seemed to occur to him to doubt the accomplishment of his purpose. For our own part, we do not admire the capital which he built, nor the place he selected; both are mistakes, in our humble opinion, as time will prove and is proving. But it is impossible not to admire such a masterly effort of human volition as the erection of Petersburgh.

In the year 1700 was formed the alliance between Augustus the Strong, elector of Saxony and king of Poland, the king of Denmark, and the Czar Peter, against Charles the Twelfth, king of Sweden, then a boy of eighteen, of whose

character nothing was known, and who, it was thought probable, might be bullied. The Czar, as we know, desired Ingria and Carelia. Augustus wished to regain Esthonia and Livonia, ceded by Poland to Charles the Eleventh of Sweden; and Denmark wished to recover Holstein and Schleswig. It soon appeared that the allied sovereigns had got hold of the wrong man. Charles the Twelfth, to the astonishment of his own court no less than of his enemies, in one instant blazed forth a hero. He "smote the sledded Polack," to begin with; then defeated the Danes; and, having thus despatched his two most formidable enemies in appearance, he was at leisure to devote his whole attention to the Czar, whom, however, he treated with the contempt which a thoroughbred soldier, at the head of tried and disciplined troops, naturally felt for the barbarous autocrat of barbarous hordes.

Peter, however, who knew nothing of war but in theory, with the exception of his maiden campaign of Azoff, went manfully forward to the encounter. He invaded Ingria at the head of sixty thousand men; and wishing, like Andrew Aguecheek, to "keep on the windy side of the law," and to save appearances, he defended his invasion by the ludicrous pretext, that his ambassadors had been charged exorbitant prices for provisions on their tour through the Swedish provinces to Holland, and that he himself had been denied a sight of the citadel at Riga. Not that he wanted Riga himself, or Ingria, or Livonia,—"O, no, not at all;"—but the preposterous charges made by the butchers and bakers of Ingria were insults which could only be washed out in blood. On the 20th of September he laid siege to Narva, a strongly fortified town on the river Narowa. On the 19th of November, Charles the Twelfth fell upon Peter's army during a tremendous snow-storm, which blew directly in their teeth, and with nine thousand soldiers completely routed and cut to pieces or captured about sixty thousand Russians. Never

was a more ignominious defeat. The Russians were slaughtered like sheep, and their long petticoats prevented the survivors from running away half as fast as they wished. The consequence was, that, according to the Swedish accounts, the prisoners four times outnumbered the whole Swedish army.

One would have thought that this would have settled the Czar for a little while, and kept him quiet and reasonable. It did so. He preserved the most imperturbable *sang-froid* after his return to Moscow, and devoted himself with more zeal than ever to the junction of the Baltic and the Euxine, just at the moment when the former seemed farthest from him, and when a common man would have been "qualmish at the name" of Baltic. At the same time, reversing the commonplace doctrine, he continues in war to prepare for peace,—with one hand importing sheep from Saxony, erecting linen and paper factories, building hospitals and founding schools, while with the other he melts all the church and convent-bells in Moscow into cannon, and makes every preparation for a vigorous campaign the ensuing season. He had not the slightest suspicion that he was beaten. He was, in fact, one of those intellectual Titans, who never feel their strength till they have been fairly struck to the earth. "I know very well," he says in his journal, "that the Swedes will have the advantage of us for a considerable time; but they will teach us at length to beat them." And at a later period he says:—"If we had obtained a victory over the Swedes at Narva, being, as we were, so little instructed in the arts of war and policy, into what an abyss might not this good fortune have sunk us! On the contrary, the success of the Swedes cost them very dear afterwards at Pultowa."

In the following spring, his troops obtained some trifling successes, and General Scherematoff made the memorable capture of Marienburg, in Livonia,—memorable not so much

in a military point of view, as on account of a young and pretty Livonian girl, who was captured with the town. This young woman, whose Christian name was Martha, without any patronymic, or any at least that has been preserved, was born near Dorpt, and had been educated by one Dr. Gluch, a Lutheran minister at Marienburg, who pronounced her a "pattern of virtue, intelligence, and good conduct;" she had been married the day before the battle of Marienburg to a Swedish sergeant, who fell in the action, and she now found herself alone, a friendless, helpless widow and orphan of sixteen, exposed without any protector to all the horrors of a besieged and captured town.

If a writer of fiction, with a brain fertile in extravagant and incredible romance, had chosen to describe to us this young peasant-girl, weeping half distracted among the smoking ruins of an obscure provincial town, and then, after rapidly shifting a few brilliant and tumultuous scenes in his phantasmagoria, had presented to us the same orphan girl as a crowned empress, throned upon a quarter of the world, and the sole arbitress and autocrat of thirty millions of human beings, and all this without any discovery of a concealed origin, without crime and without witchcraft, with nothing supernatural in the machinery, and nothing intricate in the plot,—should we not all have smiled at his absurdity? And yet, this captive girl became the consort of the Czar Peter, and upon his death the empress of all the Russias. The Russian General Bauer saw her, and rescued her from the dangers of the siege. She afterwards became the mistress of Menzikoff, with whom she lived till 1704, when, in the seventeenth year of her age, the Czar saw her, was captivated by her beauty, and took her for his mistress, and afterwards privately, and then publicly, married her.

It is to this epoch that belongs the abolition of the patriarchal dignity in Russia. Peter, having at a blow destroyed the Strelitzes, had long intended to annihilate the ecclesiastical

power, the only balance which existed in the country to the autocracy of the sovereign. The superstition of the Russians was, and is, unbounded. Their principal saint was Saint Anthony, who, says a quaint old author, "came all the way from Rome to Novogorod by water on a millstone, sailing down the Tiber to Civita Vecchia, from thence passing through several seas to the mouth of the Neva, then went up that, and, crossing the lake Ladoga into the Volkhoff, arrived at the city before named. Besides this extraordinary voyage, he wrought several other miracles as soon as he landed, where the monastery now stands that is dedicated to him; one was, to order a company of fisherman to cast their nets into the sea; which having done, they immediately drew up, with a great quantity of fish, a large trunk containing several church ornaments, sacred utensils, and priestly vestments for celebrating the liturgy, which the Russians, as well as the Eastern Greeks, believe was first performed at Rome in the same manner and with the same ceremonies as they themselves use at this time. The people tell you farther, that he built himself a little cell, in which he ended his days. In this place there now stands a chapel, in which they say he was buried, and that his body remains as uncorrupted as at the instant of his death. Over the door of the cell, the monks show a millstone, which they endeavour to make the ignorant people believe is the very same that the saint sailed upon from Rome, and to which great devotions were once paid, and many offerings made, till the time Peter the Great made himself sovereign pontiff."

To this saint, or to Saint Nicolas, we forget which, letters of introduction were always addressed by the priests, and placed in the hands of the dead when laid in their coffins. The superstition of the Russians is grosser and more puerile than that of any people purporting to be Christians. They would rather starve than eat pigeons, because the Holy Ghost assumed the form of a dove; they dip their new-born children

into the Neva in January, through holes cut in the ice, directly after the ceremony of blessing the water has been concluded by the Patriarch; and it would be an easy but endless task to enumerate other similar absurdities. It may be supposed, that the patriarchal dignity, founded upon superstition as solid as this, would be a difficult power to contend with. It was so. The Patriarch's power was enormous. He pronounced sentence of life, and death, and torture, without intervention of any tribunal. On Palm Sunday, he rode to church upon an ass "caparisoned in white linen," at the head of a long procession of ecclesiastical and civil dignitaries, with a mitre upon his head, and "skirts of many colors, three or four ells long," borne by a band of young men; while the Czar walked uncovered by his side, holding the bridle of the beast upon his arm.

This dignity, which had been established by a sort of accident in the year 1588, up to which time the Russian church acknowledged the supremacy of the Patriarch of Constantinople, had grown to be very distasteful to Peter. The church was the greatest possible enemy to his plans of reformation. The bigotry of its opposition to all his projects was insurmountable. Besides, it was very inconvenient that any one should have any power, or any rights, except himself. He determined to annihilate the office of Patriarch, and to place himself at the head of the church. We do not find, however, that he thought it necessary to go through an apprenticeship in this profession, as he had done in others; but on the contrary, upon the death of the Patriarch Adrian, which happened about this time, he simply appointed himself *pontifex maximus*, and declined nominating any other Patriarch. The man who had destroyed the Janizaries, cut off the beards of his subjects, and changed the course of the sun, was also strong enough to trample the prelate's mitre in the dust. He was entirely successful in his contest with the church. The clergy made but feeble resistance. The printing-press, to

be sure, which he had first introduced into Russia, swarmed with libels upon him, and denounced him as Antichrist; but he was defended by others of the clergy, "because the number six hundred and sixty-six was not found in his name, and he had not the sign of the beast."

Before the close of the year 1702, the troops of the Czar had driven the Swedes from the Ladoga and the Neva, and had taken possession of all the ports in Carelia and Ingria. On the 16th of May, without waiting another moment after having possessed himself of the locality, he begins to build his metropolis. One hundred thousand miserable workmen are consumed in the first twelve months, succumbing to the rigorous climate and the unhealthy position. But "*il faut casser des œufs pour faire une omelette;*" in one year's time there are thirty thousand houses in Petersburg. Never was there such a splendid improvisation. Look for a moment at a map of Russia, and say if Petersburg was not a magnificent piece of volition,—a mistake, certainly, and an extensive one,—but still a magnificent mistake. Upon a delta, formed by the dividing branches of the Neva,—upon a miserable morass half under water, without stones, without clay, without earth, without wood, without building materials of any kind,—having behind it the outlet of the lake Ladoga and its tributary swamps, and before it the gulf of Finland contracting itself into a narrow compass, and ready to deluge it with all the waters of the Baltic, whenever the southwest wind should blow a gale eight-and-forty hours,—with a climate of polar severity, and a soil as barren as an iceberg, —was not Petersburg a bold *impromptu?* We never could look at this capital, with its imposing though monotonous architecture, its colossal squares, its vast colonnades, its endless vistas, its spires and minarets sheathed in barbaric gold and flashing in the sun, and remember the magical rapidity with which it was built, and the hundred thousand lives that

were sacrificed in building it, without recalling Milton's description of the building of Pandemonium:—

"Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation, ...
Built like a temple, where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave; nor did there want
Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven;
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon
Nor great Alcairo such magnificence
Equalled in all their glories, to enshrine
Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxury. The ascending pile
Stood fixed her stately height; and straight the doors
Opening their brazen folds discover, wide
Within, her ample spaces o'er the smooth
And level pavement."

Within a few months after the foundation of Petersburg and Cronstadt, Peter had the pleasure of piloting into his new seaport with his own hands a vessel belonging to his old friend, Cornelius Calf, of Saardam. The transfer of the seat of government, by the removal of the senate from Moscow to Petersburg, was effected a few years afterwards. Since that time, the repudiated Oriental capital of the ancient Czars, the magnificent Moscow, with her golden tiara and her Eastern robe, has sat, like Hagar in the wilderness, deserted and lonely in all her barbarian beauty. Yet even now, in many a backward look and longing sigh she reads plainly enough that she is not forgotten by her sovereign, that she is still at heart preferred, and that she will eventually triumph over her usurping and artificial rival.

The building of Petersburg in a year was, however, a mere *aside* in the great military drama that was going on. Peter founded this city as soon as he had won a place for it; but

the war still went on. While the Czar was erecting his capital, establishing woollen manufactures, and importing sheep from Saxony, Charles the Twelfth was knocking the Elector of Saxony off the Polish throne, putting Stanislaus Leckzinsky in his place, and ravaging all Poland and Saxony. The scenes of the great drama which occupied the next few years, but which we have no intention of sketching, opened in Poland, and closed on the confines of Turkey. It is a magnificent, eventful, important drama, a chapter of history which has been often written and is familiar to almost every one, and yet which would well bear handling again. There is no life of Peter which is in all respects satisfactory, which does not partake too much of eulogium or censure in its estimation of his character; and there is none which developes with sufficient accuracy and impartiality, and in a sufficiently striking manner, the stirring events of the great Northern war. The brilliant drama enacted in the first fifteen years of the present century—forming probably the most splendid chapter in the military history of the world, and which is still so fresh in the minds of men—has thrown into comparative oblivion the very picturesque and imposing scenes which were displayed in the first fifteen years of the eighteenth. And yet what a magnificent subject for the historical painter, what imposing personages, what dramatic catastrophes, what sudden and bewildering reverses, what wild scenery, what Salvator-like *chiaroscuro*,—dark Sarmatian forests enveloping the actors in mystery and obscurity, with flashes of light breaking upon the anxious suspense of Europe, and revealing portentous battles, sieges, and hairbreadth escapes,—what "dreadful marches" through the wilderness, what pitched combats, upon whose doubtful result hinged, as almost never before or since, the weal or woe of millions, and in which kings fought sword in hand in the hottest of the fight, with their crowns staked upon the issue.

There was always something very exciting to our imagin-

ation in the characters of the three kings who were the principal actors in the Northern war. There seemed to be a strange, fitful, mythical character about the war and the men who waged it. The Elector Augustus of Saxony, king of Poland, with his superhuman and almost fabulous physical strength, his personal bravery, his showy, chivalrous character, his world-renowned adventures in a gentler field, familiar to posterity through the records of "*La Saxe galante*," is a striking personage. It is astonishing that such a magnificent Lothario should have chosen, for the barren honor of being elected to the Polish throne, to exchange the brilliant and voluptuous gaiety of his own court for "the bloody noses and cracked crowns" which were "passing current" in Poland. But it is still more astonishing, that, having once engaged in the affair, he should have cut such a miserable figure in it. The splendid Augustus, Augustus the Strong, Augustus the Gallant, became merely the anvil for the sledgehammers of Charles and Peter. He made a fool of himself; he disgraced himself more than it seemed possible for a human being to disgrace himself; he humiliated himself more completely, more stupidly, because more unnecessarily, than it seemed possible for the greatest idiot, as well as the most arrant coward, to humiliate himself. He lost his crown at the very start, went down on his knees in the dirt to pick it up again, made a secret treaty with Charles, renouncing his alliance with the Czar, deserted his ally with incredible folly just as the Russians in conjunction with his own troops were gaining a brilliant victory and entering Warsaw in triumph, concealed his shameful negotiation from his own generals, while at the same time he wrote a letter to Charles, apologizing for having gained a victory, and assuring him that he had intended to have drawn off his troops and deserted to the enemy, but that his orders had not been obeyed, and then sneaked off to Charles's camp, where, in obedience to that monarch's orders, he capped the climax of his shame by writing a letter of

sincere and humble congratulation to Stanislaus Leckzinsky for supplanting him upon his own throne. Peter, in the sequel, put his crown on his head again, to be sure; but for ever after he looked like

> "The thief,
> Who from the shelf the precious diadem stole,
> And put it in his pocket."

What a pity that this man, who was deficient neither in courage nor, we suppose, in a certain amount of intellect sufficient for all ordinary purposes, should have got himself into such a scrape, merely for the sake of carrying an election over the Prince of Conti and Stanislaus! The truth was, that the moment he got among giants,—giants in action, like Charles and Peter,—he showed himself the pigmy he was in mind, despite his stature, his strength, and his personal bravery.

And Charles the Twelfth, the hero, the crowned gladiator; —what had he to do with the eighteenth century? The hero of every body's boyhood, he remains a puzzle and a mystery to us in our maturer years. He seems an impossibility in the times in which he lived. On the death of Charles the Eleventh, and the commencement of the hostile movement by Russia and Denmark, the stripling sovereign seems to dilate into the vast, shadowy proportions of some ancient hero of Scandinavian Sagas. He seems like one of the ancient Norsemen, whose vocation was simply to fight; —who conquered the whole earth, not because they wanted it, but because they were sent into the world for no other earthly purpose; a legitimate representative of the old Sea Kings, or rather an ancient Sea King himself, reappearing in the eighteenth century, with no specially defined object, and proposing to himself no particular business in the world which he had so suddenly revisited, but to fight as much as possible, and with any body that came along. Viewed in

this light, he can be judged more justly. He was out of place where he was. He would have been a magnificent hero and a useful personage six or seven hundred years earlier. He was a very mischievous character in the eighteenth century. People no longer fought in the same way as before; they no longer fought for the fun of it; they now had always an object in their wars. Sovereigns, however belligerent in taste, had always an eye to their interest. This was pre-eminently the case with his great antagonist, Peter. He never fought except for an object; but sooner than relinquish the object, he would have fought till "sun and moon were in the flat sea sunk." He was a creator, a founder, a law-giver, as well as a warrior. He was constructive; Charles merely destructive. The Czar was a great statesman; Charles only a great gladiator. In war, Peter was always preparing for peace; as for Charles, after he first started upon his career, he never seemed to have had the faintest suspicion that there was such a thing, such a *status*, as peace. He came into the world to fight, and he fought; he lived fighting, he died fighting. He poured himself out, like a fierce torrent from his native mountains, in one wild, headlong, devastating flood. There was nothing beneficent, nothing fertilizing, in his career. His kingdom was neglected, his treasury exhausted, his subjects impoverished; while he himself, from the admiration and wonder of Europe, became, or would have become, but for his timely death, its laughing-stock. The hero at Narva was only Bombastes Furioso at Bender.

While Charles was deposing Augustus and crowning Stanislaus, the troops of Peter were not idle. Keeping his eye ever fixed upon his great object, the Czar was adding to his domain province after province of what was then the Swedish seacoast. Dorpat and Narva are captured, and with them all Ingria, of which Peter makes the pastry-cook's apprentice governor. Courland soon follows, and now the

Czar joins his forces to those of Augustus in Poland. While he is called off to quell an insurrection in Astracan, (distances are nothing to the Czar,) Augustus seizes the opportunity to make the ignominious compact with the Swedish king, to which we have referred, and—most shameful and perfidious part of his treason—surrenders to the vengeance of the ferocious Charles, *to the torture and the wheel*, the unfortunate General Patkul, ambassador of the Czar at the court of Augustus, who had incurred the hatred of the Swedish monarch for heading a deputation of Livonian nobles, and presenting to him a petition concerning the rights and privileges of their province. The allies of King Augustus take possession of Warsaw, while King Augustus himself is writing his congratulations to King Stanislaus.

Peter, having helped himself to almost as many Swedish provinces as he cared for, while Charles has been bullying Augustus and breaking Patkul on the wheel, is now disposed to treat for peace. The French envoy at Dresden offers his services, but Charles declines treating except at Moscow. "My brother Charles wishes to act Alexander," says the Czar; "but he shall not find me Darius."

Peter now conceives almost exactly the same plan by which the conqueror of the nineteenth century was entrapped and destroyed. He makes his country and climate fight for him, and retreats slowly before his advancing enemy, drawing him on step by step to a barren country, whence he could have no retreat, and where Peter could suddenly advance from his own secure position, and overwhelm him at a blow. With masterly generalship, he retreats before his hot-headed adversary, still "tempting him to the desert with his sword," marches to Moghilef and Orsha, on the eastern bank of the Dnieper, a position in free communication with Smolensko, sends his Cossacks to lay waste the country for thirty miles round, and then orders them to join him beyond the Borysthenes. The two Northern monarchs now disappear from

the eyes of anxious Europe among the wildernesses of ancient Scythia. Peter, with a hundred thousand men, well provided, and in convenient communication with his own cities and magazines, remains quiet. Charles, intent upon dictating terms at Moscow, crosses the Borysthenes with eighty thousand men. A fierce battle without results is fought on the Berezina. Charles pushes on to Smolensko. By order of Peter, the country between the Borysthenes and Smolensko had been laid waste. At the approach of winter, the Swedish army dwindles and wastes away beneath the horrors of the iron climate. Still Charles advances, when suddenly, and to the Czar inexplicably, he turns aside from his path, abandons his design upon Moscow, and directs his steps to the Ukraine. The mystery is solved by the news of Mazeppa's treason. The old hetman of the Cossacks deserts to Charles, promising to bring over all his troops; he brings no one but himself; the Cossacks scorn his treachery, and remain faithful to their Czar.

By this time it was December, the cold intense, and, the Swedish army perishing by thousands, Count Piper implores his master to halt, and go into the best winter-quarters they could find in the Ukraine. The king refuses, resolved to reduce the Ukraine, and then march to Moscow. In the month of May, after a winter spent by the Czar's forces in comfortable quarters, and by the king's exposed to all kinds of misery, Charles lays seige to Pultowa with eighteen thousand men, the remnant of his eighty thousand. On the 15th of June, 1709, the Czar appears before Pultowa, and, by feint of attack upon the Swedes, succeeds in throwing two thousand men into the place; and at length, a few days after, gives him battle, and utterly routs and destroys his army. Both the king and the Czar, throughout this

"Dread Pultowa's day,
When fortune left the royal Swede."

fight in the front of the battle. Several balls pierce the Czar's clothes; while Charles, having been previously wounded in the heel, is carried through the fight upon a litter. After the total overthrow of his army, Charles escapes on horseback, with a handful of followers, and, entering the confines of Turkey, halts at Bender on the Dniester.

The battle of Pultowa and the final overthrow of Charles are followed, during the autumn and winter, by the complete conquest of Livonia,—Wiborg, Elbing, Riga, and Revel being taken early in 1710. At the same time, Peter deposes Stanislaus, and restores the illustrious Augustus.

In the mean time, Charles remains at Bender, the stipendiary of the Sultan, while Poniatowski, his emissary at the Porte, is busily intriguing to bring about a declaration of war from Turkey against the Czar. In conjunction with the Khan of the Crimean Tartars, who appeals to the Sultan's jealousy of the increasing power of Russia, and inspires him with a desire to recover Azoff and expel his encroaching neighbours from the Black Sea, the envoy succeeds. The Grand Mufti declares that it is necessary for the Sultan to go to war with the Czar; whereupon the Muscovite ambassador is forthwith "clapped into prison," by way of commencement of hostilities, and the war begins. Peter immediately makes a levy of one man in four, besides one "valet out of every two belonging to the nobility," makes a solemn declaration of war, and then marches at the head of forty thousand men to the frontier of Turkey. Previously to his departure, he makes a public proclamation of his previous marriage to Catharine; and the empress, despite his earnest remonstrances, accompanies the invading army.

It is strange that the Czar, on this expedition, should have committed the same error, and placed himself in almost the same unfortunate predicament, as his adversary, Charles. Trusting to the representations and the friendship of the faithless hospodar of Moldavia, he advances rapidly, at the

head of an insufficient force, into a hostile and barren country, relying for men and munitions of war upon his ally. Crossing the Pruth, he finds himself near Jassy, in a hostile country, between an army of Turks and another of Tartars, with a deep and rapid river between him and his own dominions. Forty thousand Russians are held at bay by two hundred thousand Turks and Tartars. The situation of the Czar is terrible; annihilation seems to stare him in the face. His enemy, Charles, visits the Turkish camp in disguise, urging the Czar's destruction upon the Vizier. A destructive battle is going on unceasingly, which in three days costs him eighteen thousand men. Retreat is impossible; no ally is near him, no succour expected. What can possibly extricate him? Shall he dash upon the Turks at the head of his remaining forces, and cut his way through them, or die, sword in hand, in the attempt? Shall he surrender to the overwhelming power of the Sultan's army, and be paraded at Constantinople as the captive Czar? Tortured and perplexed, he shuts himself up alone in his tent, and falls into terrible convulsions. None of his generals dare approach him; he has forbidden an entrance to all. Suddenly, despite of the prohibition, the captive of Marienburg stands before him. She, who at all times possessed a mysterious power to calm the spasmodic affections, half physical, half mental, to which he was subject, now appears before him like an angel to relieve his agony, and to point out an escape from impending ruin. She suggests the idea of negotiation, which had occurred to no one, in the desperate situation in which they were placed, and which, she instinctively prophesied, would still be successful. She strips herself of her jewels, and ransacks the camp for objects of value, to form a suitable present for the Grand Vizier. The Vice-Chancellor Shafiroff is despatched to the enemy's camp, and the apparently impossible result is a treaty of peace. Arms are suspended immediately, and soon afterwards honorable articles are signed, of which the

principal are the surrender of Azoff, the exclusion of the Czar from the Black Sea, the demolition of the fortress of Taganroc, the withdrawal of the Russian soldiers from the neighbourhood of the Danube, and the promise of free passage to Charles the Twelfth through Russia to his own states.

It is unnecessary to analyze or to criticise the different motives that actuated the Vizier in acceding to an honorable negotiation, when the Czar seemed to be so completely in his power. It is sufficient that this was the surprising and fortunate result of Catharine's counsel. "Her great merit," says Voltaire, "was, that she saw the possibility of negotiation, at a moment when the generals seem to have seen nothing but an inevitable misfortune." No language can describe the rage and mortification of Charles the Twelfth at this unexpected result,—at this apparently impossible escape of his hated rival from overwhelming ruin. Hastening to the camp of the Vizier, he upbraids him, as if he had been his master, instead of his stipendiary; he expresses his profound disgust, that the Czar has not been carried to Constantinople, instead of being allowed to go home so easily. "And who will govern his empire in his absence?" asked the Vizier, with bitter irony; adding, that "it would never do to have all the sovereigns away from home." In answer to this retort, Charles grins ferociously in his face, turns on his heel, and tears the Vizier's robe with his spurs. After thus insulting the great functionary of the Sultan, he continues three years longer a pensionary upon his bounty. To the reiterated entreaties of his senate, that he would return, and attend to the pressing exigencies of his kingdom, he replies, in a style worthy of Bombastes, that he would send one of his boots to govern them, and remains at Bender, still deluded and besotted with the idea that he should yet appear with a Turkish force before Moscow. At last, in 1714, after fighting a pitched battle, at the head of his valets, grooms, and house-servants, against a considerable Turkish army, sent to dislodge

him by force, he is ignominously expelled from the country whose hospitality he has so long outraged, and returns in the disguise of a courier to Sweden.

The Czar, upon his return to his dominions, gains a considerable victory over the Swedish fleet of the Baltic, commanding his own in person, in a line-of-battle ship of his own building. On arriving at Petersburg, he ordains a great triumphal procession to bring the captured ships, with their admirals and officers, up the Neva. At this time, he transfers the senate from Moscow to Petersburg, establishes assemblies, at which the penalty for infringement of the rules and regulations is to "empty the great eagle, a huge bowl, filled with wine and brandy," institutes the Academy of Arts and Sciences, founds the public library commenced with the one captured ("conveyed, the wise it call") from the University at Abo, sends a mission through Siberia to China, and draws up a map of his dominions, much of it with his own hand.

In 1715, after taking Stralsund, completing the conquest of Finland and Esthonia, and commanding in person the allied fleets of England, Denmark, and Russia, he makes a second tour in Europe, accompanied by Catharine. He revisits Saardam, where he is received with great enthusiasm, is entertained with great distinction in Paris, and visits the tomb of Cardinal Richelieu, where he exclaims, dropping upon his knees, "Thou great man, I would have given thee half of my dominions to have learned of thee to govern the other half." He drew up with his own hand a treaty of commerce with France, and returned through Berlin to Petersburg. The letters of the Margravine of Bayreuth, from Berlin, present no very flattering picture of the imperial travellers. She describes Peter as dressed plainly in a naval costume, handsome, but rude, uncouth, and of dreadful aspect; and Catharine as fat, frousy, and vulgar, needing only to be seen to betray her obscure origin, and bedizened with chains, orders, and holy relics, "making such a *Geklinkklank* as if an

ass with bells were coming along;" she represents them both as intolerable beggars, plundering the palace of every thing they could lay their hands on.

Peter had long ago constituted himself the head of the church, and treated with contempt the pretensions of the prelates to temporal power. When at Paris, however, he had received an elaborate petition from the Sorbonne, the object of which was to effect a reunion between the Greek and Latin churches. But the despot who had constituted himself the head, hand, heart, and conscience of his people,—who had annihilated throughout his empire every element of power adverse to his own,—who had crushed the soldiery, the nobility, and the clergy, deposed the Patriarch, and constituted himself the high-priest of his empire,—was not very likely to comply with the Sorbonne's invitation to acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope in his dominions. Nevertheless, he received their petition with great politeness.

On his return to Petersburg, he was vexed by the importunity of some of his own clergy, who clamored for the appointment of a Patriarch, on the ground that it was demanded by the people, and that it was necessary to assert the dignity and independence of the Greek church. Now there happened to be about Petersburg one Sotoff, a venerable jester of eighty-four, who had been the Czar's writing-master in his younger years, and at the age of seventy had been advanced to the dignity of buffoon. This venerable individual the Czar fixes upon for the office of Patriarch, previously creating him a prince and a pope. In order to make the office of Patriarch completely ridiculous in the eyes of the people, and to give them a little innocent recreation at the same time, he now ordains a solemn marriage between this Patriarch and a "buxom widow of thirty-four." We must ask indulgence, while we quote a short description of this funny ceremony from the old author already cited.

"The nuptials of this extraordinary couple were solemnized by the court

in masks or mock show. The company consisted of about four hundred persons of both sexes. Every four persons had their proper dress and peculiar musical instruments, so that they represented a hundred different sorts of habits and music, particularly of the Asiatic nations. The four persons appointed to invite the guests were the greatest stammerers that could be found in all Russia. Old decrepit men, who were not able to walk or stand, had been picked out to serve for bridesmen, stewards, and waiters. There were four running footmen, the most unwieldy fellows, who had been troubled with the gout most of their lives, and were so fat and bulky that they wanted others to lead them. The mock Czar of Moscow, who represented King David in his dress, instead of harp, had a lyre with a bear-skin to play upon. He, being the chief of the company, was carried on a sort of pageant placed on a sled, to the four corners of which were tied as many bears, which, being pricked with goads by fellows purposely appointed for it, made such a frightful roaring as well suited the confused and horrible din raised by the disagreeing instruments of the rest of the company. The Czar himself was dressed like a boor of Friesland, and skilfully beat a drum in company with three generals. In this manner, bells ringing everywhere, the ill-matched couple were attended by the masks to the altar of the great church, where they were joined in matrimony by a priest a hundred years old, who had lost his eyesight and his memory; to supply which defect, a pair of spectacles were put upon his nose, two candles held before his eyes, and the words sounded into his ears, which he was to pronounce. From church the procession went to the Czar's palace, where the diversion lasted some days. Many strange adventures and comical accidents happened on their riding sleds through the streets, too long to be related here. Thus much may suffice to show that the Czar, among all the heavy cares of government, knew how to set apart some days for the relaxation of his mind, and how ingenious he was in the contrivance of those diversions."

We confess that we are unable to agree with the grave conclusion of the author from whom we quote. To us this "ingenious diversion" seems about as sorry a jest as we ever heard of. However, it was considered "most admirable fooling" in Moscow, and at all events, after two or three repetitions, seems to have quite cured the people of their desire for Patriarchs.

"The Czar," says Voltaire, "thus laughingly avenged

twenty emperors of Germany, ten kings of France, and a host of sovereigns. This was all the fruit which the Sorbonne gathered from their not very politic idea of reuniting the Greek and Latin churches."

The darkest chapter in the life of Peter now approaches. After the lapse of a century, no one can read the account of that dreadful tragedy, the trial, condemnation, and death of the Czarowitch Alexis, without a shudder of horror. No one can contemplate the spectacle of a son judicially condemned by his father for no crime,—no one can read the record of the solemn farce which represents the trial of the unfortunate victim, without feeling all his admiration for the extraordinary qualities of the Czar swallowed up by indignation and abhorrence. Up to this time, Peter seems a man, —a hard-hearted, despotic, inexorable man, perhaps,—but he is still human. He now seems only a machine, a huge engine of unparalleled power, placed upon the earth to effect a certain task, working its mighty arms night and day with ceaseless and untiring energy, crashing through all obstacles, and annihilating every thing in its path with the unfeeling precision of gigantic mechanism.

It was hardly to be expected, to be sure, that this tremendous despot, who had recoiled before no obstacle in the path of his settled purpose, who had strode over every thing with the step of a giant, who had given two seas to an inland empire, who had conquered the most warlike nation and sovereign of Europe with barbarians in petticoats, who had crushed the nobility, annihilated the Janizaries, trampled the Patriarch in the dust,—who had repudiated his wife, because she was attached to the old customs of Muscovy, and had married and crowned a pastry-cook's mistress, because it was his sovereign will and pleasure,—it was hardly to be expected that such a man would hesitate about disinheriting his own son, if he thought proper to do so. But it might have been hoped, that he would content himself with disinheriting him,

and that the "*Pater Patriæ*," as by solemn decree he was shortly afterwards entitled, would remember that he was also father of Alexis.

This unhappy young man, the son of the repudiated wife of the Czar, seems to have been a very miserable creature. We have the fullest sympathy with the natural disappointment of Peter at the incorrigible, hopeless stupidity and profligacy of his son. Still, he had himself to blame, in a great measure, for many of his son's defects. His education had been neglected, or, rather, worse than neglected; it had been left to the care of monks, to the care of the very order of people most wedded to the ancient state of things, and most desirous of restoring it, if possible. The necessary result of such training upon a dull boy might easily have been foreseen. There was, however, not the slightest objection to disinheriting him; he had no claim to the throne, and he was totally unworthy of it. There was no law of Russia designating the eldest son as successor. On the contrary, the genius of the Russian autocracy seems to vest the fee simple of all the Russias and all the Russians in the actual autocrat, to be disposed of as he sees fit, and devised to whomsoever he deems most eligible. This had been, and was then, the law, if it be worth while to talk about law, when the will of the sovereign makes and alters the law at any moment. Alexis seems to have been weak, dissolute, and intriguing,—a sot, a bigot, a liar, and a coward,—the tool of "bushy-bearded" priests and designing women, whose control of the empire had been terminated by Peter's energetic measures. The Czar's predominating fear was, that, at his death, the empire would relapse into the quagmire of barbarism from which he had reclaimed it. Alexis, priest-ridden and ignorant, was sure to become a tool in the hands of priests as soon as he should ascend the throne, and the old order of things would as surely be reinstated.

Peter, soon after the death of his son's wife (a virtuous

and intelligent German princess, whose life seems to have been worn out by the neglect, cruelty, and debauchery of her husband), remonstrates with him upon his evil courses, commands him to reform, and threatens else to disinherit him. "Amend your life, or else turn monk," says the Czar. "I intend to embrace the monastic life," replies the son; "I pledge myself to do so, and only ask your gracious permission." The Czar, just before his departure for Germany and France, visits Alexis, who was, or pretended to be, confined to his bed by sickness. The young man again renews his renunciation of the succession, and repeats his pledge to become a monk. Peter bids him take six months to consider the matter, takes an affectionate farewell of him, and sets out upon his travels. As soon as his back is turned, Alexis realizes the old distich:—

> "The devil was sick, the devil a monk would be;
> The devil got well, the devil a monk was he."

He recovers his health instantaneously, and celebrates his father's departure by getting very drunk with a select party of friends. Seven months afterwards, the Czar writes to him to join him at Copenhagen, if he had determined to reform his life and make himself fit for the succession; if not, to execute his monastic plans without delay. Alexis accordingly announces his intention of going to Copenhagen, draws a heavy bill on Menzikoff for his travelling expenses, leaves Moscow, and, instead of Copenhagen, sneaks off to Vienna. The emperor of Germany, however, turns him off, and he goes to Naples. Two envoys of the Czar, Tolstoy and Romanzoff, proceed to Naples, and induce him, by ample promises of forgiveness on the part of his father, to return. The following is a part of his father's letter.

"I write to you for the last time, to tell you that you are to execute my will, which Tolstoy and Romanzoff will announce to you on my part. *If you obey me, I assure you and I promise, in the name of God, that*

I will not punish you, and that, if you return, I will love you more than ever; but if you do not, I give you as your father, in virtue of the power which I have received from God, my eternal curse; and as your sovereign, I assure you that I shall find the means of punishing you; in which I hope that God will assist me, and that he will take my just cause in his hand."

Upon the faith of this sacred promise, Alexis accompanies the two emissaries to Moscow, where they arrive on the 13th of February, 1718. The day after his arrival, the Czar, by way of keeping his promise of pardoning and loving him more than ever, calls a grand council of the senate and all the dignitaries of the empire, and there, in the most solemn, formal, and authentic manner, disinherits Alexis, deprives him of all claim to the succession, and obliges him, and all those present, to take the oath of future allegiance to his and Catharine's son Peter, then an infant, who, however, shortly afterwards died. This was the beginning of the fulfilment of his promise; but it was only the beginning of the end. Alexis was worthless, ignorant, stupid, and depraved; but he had committed no crime, and deserved no punishment, certainly not the punishment of death. A comfortable state of things there would be in the world, if every man who happened to have a profligate dunce of a son were to be justified in cutting his head off; and for an autocrat and high-priest to do so seems to us a thousand times more atrocious.

However, the Czar seems to have been determined, after his first evasion, to get rid of him, and accordingly produces the charge of a conspiracy. Alexis is formally accused of conspiring against his father's life and throne, and a pack of perfectly contemptible stuff is collected together to make what was called evidence; it consisted of confessions of his mistress, his pot-companions, and his confessor,—all upon the rack,—that he had been known to express wishes for his father's death, and to throw out hints about receiving assist-

ance, in a certain event, from the emperor of Germany. But in the whole mess of it there is not the faintest shadow of a shade of evidence that he had ever conspired, that he had ever entertained any design, against his father; and the necessary result, upon any candid mind, of a perusal of the evidence is a conviction of his perfect innocence of the crime charged upon him. There is not a country in the world, where there is any pretence of administering justice, in which such an accusation, supported by such evidence, would not have been hooted out of court. Still, the accusation was made, and something which they called a trial was instituted. The prince is sworn upon the Holy Evangelists to tell the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; and he immediately begins to utter lies by the wholesale. His weak intellect seems to have been possessed and disordered by one idea,—that, if he should confess a great deal more than was expected, and make himself out much more guilty than he was supposed to be, he should perhaps obtain his pardon. Having, however, done nothing criminal, and having said nothing that could be fairly considered suspicious, he dives into the bottom of his breast, and brings up and displays his most secret thoughts by way of self-accusation. The truth seems to have been, that he was bullied to the last degree. We know the Czar to have been a man who eminently inspired awe, and Alexis was of an uncommonly sneaking disposition. As the event proved, Peter absolutely frightened his son to death. Certainly, never were the forms of judicial investigation so outraged as in this trial. The details are sickening, and we have already transgressed the indulgence of our readers. Let one or two questions, made by the prosecution, and answered by the criminal in writing, suffice as specimens of the Czar's criminal jurisprudence.

"When you saw, in the letter of Beyer [a gossiping envoy from the German emperor's court, who wrote to his sovereign all the news, true or false, as fast as he picked it up], that

there was a revolt in the army of Mecklenburg, you were rejoiced; I believe that you had some view, and that you would have declared for the rebels, even in my lifetime." The answer of Alexis is, "*If the rebels had called me in your lifetime, I should probably have joined them, supposing that they had been strong enough.*" In answer to another question, he avows that "he had accused himself before God, in confession to the priest Jacques, of having wished the death of his father; and that the confessor Jacques had replied, 'God will pardon you for it; we all wish it as much.'"

After this farce of a trial had been enacted, the Czar, waiving his prerogative of life and death, determined to submit the case to the judgment of the clergy, judges, and high officers of state. This always seemed to us very paltry. It was an attempt to shift the responsibility of the murder off his own shoulders, where only it belonged. The council of clergy, after recognizing the Czar's power,—*jus vitæ et necis*, —which nobody ever doubted, and citing several cases from the Old Testament, recommended mercy, relying principally upon Absalom's case. It was plain they washed their hands of it. Meantime, further investigation, it was pretended, had made the matter worse; and, on the 5th of July, the ministers, senators, and generals unanimously condemn the prince to death, leaving the sentence, of course, open to the Czar's revision, and prescribing no particular mode of execution. The sentence of death is published, Alexis is informed of it, and seems literally to have been frightened to death by it; for, while the Czar was deliberating what course to take (and the opinion of the most indulgent—we confess not ours—seems to be that he did not intend the execution of the sentence), the unfortunate young man was carried off by a kind of apoplectic seizure, and, on the 7th of July, died contrite, receiving the sacrament and extreme unction, and imploring his father's pardon.

This account seems to be now accepted as the true one.

But the Marquis de Custine, in his greediness to devour every thing that blackens the character of Russia in general, and of Peter the Great in particular, could not, of course, fail to reproduce the stories that have been told and retold, exploded and reëxploded,—and which will continue, we suppose, to be told and exploded, believed in and ridiculed, to the end of time. It was not believed by many people in Europe at the time, and it is not believed by the Comte de Ségur and the Marquis de Custine now, that the prince died a natural death,—if the cataleptic convulsive fit, consequent upon extreme and protracted mental agony, which finally ended his life, can be called a natural, and not a violent, death. All sorts of stories were told at the time, each more incredible than the other, and each disproving the other. The Czar was said to have knouted him to death with his own hands,—to have poisoned him with a potion which he sent Marshal Weyde to an apothecary's shop in broad daylight to procure,—to have cut off his head, and then to have had it privately sewed on again by Madame Cramer;—in short, to have made away with him by a variety of means, all of which could not well have been true, and all of which are, under the circumstances, extremely unlikely. To us it seems ridiculous to add new horror to this terrible tragedy. We are not sure, either, that the supposed assassination makes the matter any worse. "Murder most foul as at the best it is," we are unable to see that the private murder is a whit more atrocious than the public, solemn, and judicial murder, of which the Czar stands accused and condemned to all eternity.

It certainly does not seem to have been in Peter's nature to have taken his son off by poison, or in any private way. The autocrat was a man who gloried in his own actions, in displaying the tremendous, irresistible power of his own will. He had collected all the dignity of his empire to assist at the spectacle; he had invoked the attention of all Europe

to the tragedy he proposed to enact; he had determined to execute his son, and he did intend, we have no doubt, to murder him in the most ceremonious manner, and for the good of his country. We have not a doubt of his motives; he thought himself actuated by the purest philanthropy; but these expansive bosoms, which embrace the whole earth, or a third of it, in their colossal affection, are apt to be deficient in the humbler virtues of love and charity, when it comes to detail. The truth was, Peter loved his country so well that he determined to sacrifice his son to its welfare; in other words, his heart was as hard as the nether millstone, and he would have sacrificed twenty thousand sons rather than have been thwarted in the cherished projects of his ambitious intellect. But we confess we can conceive of no motive for the alleged assassination. It was not in the character of the emperor, and it was a piece of stupidity as well as barbarity. "If the assassination had trammelled up the consequence" of all that preceded, "then it were well;" and the deed might have been possible. But the broken faith to his son, the atrocious trial, the deliberate condemnation, could in no manner have been obliterated from the minds of men by the "deep damnation" of a secret "taking off." He had announced to the world his intention of executing his son for alleged disobedience and conspiracy; he had sent to every court in Europe copies of the judicial proceedings, ending in the condemnation of the victim; he had been publicly brandishing the sword of justice over his son's neck, and calling upon the world to witness the spectacle; and why he should have made all this parade for the mere purpose of poisoning him, knouting him, or cutting his head off, in secret, seems inexplicable.

Besides, as Voltaire very strongly urges, the different kinds of assassination alleged, disprove each other, and the fact that Alexis was never alone from the moment of the condemnation to the hour of his death makes any secret execution impos-

sible. The knouting story has not found many advocates; the poisoning and the beheading are supported about equally, and are both about equally probable. It certainly was not probable that the Czar would have sent a high officer of court to fetch the poison, and a few minutes afterwards have dispatched another messenger to bid the first make great haste. This is not exactly the way in which poisoning is usually managed. And the other story, that the young man's head was cut off and then sewed on again, is so ludicrous, that it would deserve no attention but for the number of writers who have reported it upon the authority of contemporaneous gossip. At what moment the Czar found a secret opportunity to cut the head off,—how Madam Cramer found a secret opportunity to sew it on again,—how this ingenious lady, who, we suppose, had not practised this kind of needle-work as a profession, was able to fit it on so adroitly as to deceive not only the whole court, but even the patient himself, for, as far as we can understand the story, Alexis seems to have received extreme unction and the sacrament, in presence of about a hundred witnesses, after Mrs. Cramer's job was finished,—are all matters very difficult to explain. Moreover, as we have already observed, we do not see much greater atrocity in the one case than the other. Peter's will being the only law of the land, he could do what he chose, execute his son as he chose, and by his own hand if he chose. The only law which could have any binding force over the autocrat was the law of nature, and that, to his soul of granite, was weaker than the spider's web. He was determined to sacrifice his son to the welfare of his country, and to insure the continuance of his reformation in church and state. Sacrifices of this sort have always found advocates and admirers, and are sure to be repeated on great occasions, and at rare intervals, to the end of time.

Dismissing this painful subject, we hasten to conclude this imperfect sketch of the principal events in the Czar's history.

We will not dwell upon the extraordinary, but abortive, intrigues of the two arch plotters of Europe, Cardinal Alberoni and Baron Goertz, by which the Czar and the Swedish monarch were to be reconciled, and combined in a plot against George the First of England, and in favor of the Pretender. A chance bullet, from "a petty fortress and a dubious hand," at Friedrichsthal in Norway, terminates at once the life of Charles and the intrigues of Goertz. The baron, instead of taking the crown from George's head, loses his own head at Stockholm; Alberoni is turned out of Spain; and the Czar remains *in statu quo*, having been careful, throughout the whole intrigue, which was perfectly well known in England, to make the most barefaced promises of eternal friendship to the House of Hanover; and "to reiterate," as the diplomatists say, "the assurances of his distinguished consideration" for the English king, all the time that he was plotting against his throne.

The death of Charles alters the complexion of Europe. Peace, which was hardly possible during his lifetime, becomes the immediate object of all parties. The prince of Hesse, husband of Queen Ulrica, and, by cession of his wife, king of Sweden, is desirous of peace upon almost any terms which will allow of an honorable repose to his exhausted and impoverished country. Peter, having obtained possession of all the provinces he required, is ready to sheathe the sword, on receiving proper recognition of his title to the property thus acquired; and accordingly, after a good deal of bravado upon the Baltic between the English and Russian fleets, and the burning of some fifty or sixty Swedish villages, innumerable *châteaux*, and fifteen or twenty thousand houses, in a descent made by the Russians upon the coasts of Sweden, the war, which continues with ferocity during all the negotiations for peace, is at last brought to a conclusion by the signing of the treaty of Neustadt, on the 10th of September, 1721. By this treaty of peace, the Czar is guaranteed in the possession

of Livonia, Esthonia, Ingria, Carelia, Wiborg, and the many adjacent islands, and thus reaps the reward of twenty years' hard labor; receiving, moreover, from the senate and synod, by solemn decree,—what seems insipid homage for an autocrat,—the titles of Great, Emperor, and *Pater Patriæ*.

After an interval of two years, passed in establishing woollen, paper, and glass manufactories, embellishing his capital, and regulating the internal and foreign commerce of Russia, we suddenly find him, accompanied by the faithful Catharine, descending the Volga at the head of a large army. A revolution which had broken out in Persia, in the course of which the reigning sovereign, the imbecile Hussein, finds himself hard pressed by the Affghan prince, Meer Mahmoud, offers an opportunity to Peter to possess himself of a few maritime provinces on the Caspian, to console him for the loss of Azoff consequent upon the disaster of the Pruth. A few hundred Russians, engaged in commerce at the town of Shamakia, having been cut to pieces during some of the hostile movements, he finds therein a pretext for invading Persia, and requiring satisfaction from both sovereign and rebel. Failing in this, of course, he sails from Astracan to Derbent, which town he takes possession of, and, soon afterwards, being applied to by the unhappy Sophi for protection against the Affghans, he consents to afford it, in consideration of receiving the towns of Bachu and Derbent, together with the provinces of Guilan, Mazanderan, and Asterabad. "It is not land I want, but water," exclaims the Czar, as he snatches these sunny provinces, the whole southern coast of the Caspian, the original kingdom of Cyrus, from the languid hand of the Persian, without the expenditure of the blood, time, and treasure which it had cost him to wrest the frozen swamps of Finland from the iron grasp of Charles.

Peter's conquests are now concluded. The Russian colossus now stands astride, from the "thrilling regions of thick-

ribbed ice" on the Baltic, to the "fragrant bowers of Asterabad" on the Caspian, with a foot upon either sea. The man who had begun to gratify his passion for maritime affairs by paddling a little skiff on the Yausa, and who became, on his accession, only the barbaric sovereign of an inland and unknown country, now finds himself the lord of two seas, with a considerable navy, built almost by his own hand. It was upon his return to Petersburg from his Persian expedition, that he ordered the very skiff in which he commenced navigation to be brought from Moscow, and took occasion to give to his court an entertainment, which was called the "consecration, of the Little Grandsire," that being the name he had given to the skiff. At the time of this ceremony of the consecration, the progeny of the Little Grandsire numbered already, according to the returns of the admiralty, "forty-one ships of the line, in a condition for service at sea, carrying two thousand one hundred and six guns, manned with fourteen thousand nine hundred seamen, besides a proportionate number of frigates, galleys, and other smaller craft." The little cabin, which was Peter's house while building Petersburg, still stands upon what is now called the Citadel; it is consecrated as a chapel, filled with votive offerings, and inclosed with a brick wall, and the Little Grandsire is religiously preserved within the building,

We are certainly not taken in by the colossal puerility of the Russian marine, any more than the Marquis de Custine is; and, although the descendants of the Little Grandsire are now at least double the number they were at the time of the consecration, we have not heard of any very brilliant exploits on any ocean to justify the very imposing and very Roman *rostra* which decorate the exchange at Petersburg. To use a vulgar but expressive phrase, the Russian navy has not yet set the Baltic on fire, and we doubt if it ever will. If it could thaw it a little, it would be all the better; for Cronstad being blockaded by ice six months in the year, the navy is

only paraded during the pleasant weather for the amusement of the autocrat. As long as England stands where it does, and the Russian winter remains as it is, we shall hardly fear much from the descendants of the Little Grandsire, at least till the capital is shifted to the Bosphorus.

At the same time, we are far from agreeing with the Marquis de Custine in his sweeping condemnation of Peter's policy in building Petersburg and establishing a marine. It was a thousand times better to have the Black Sea and the Baltic than nothing; and if his successors had taken half as much pains as himself in fostering the maritime trade of the country, and if Russia, instead of all this parade of ships of the line, frigates, and steamers, could create a mercantile marine for itself, and could manage its own considerable foreign trade, now monopolized by foreign vessels, principally the English, she might still obtain the germ of a maritime population, while waiting for Constantinople. But till she learns that the strength of a navy consists in sailors and not ships, she is not likely to be a very formidable power upon the ocean, let her build as many line-of-battle ships as she chooses.

The only other interesting incident in Peter's life, which now draws rapidly to its close, was the coronation of Catharine as empress consort. This event was celebrated with extraordinary pomp, and particular stress is laid in the emperor's proclamation upon her conduct in the affair of the Pruth; and the salvation of himself and his army is attributed to her heroism and presence of mind. There seems to be little doubt, that Peter intended this solemn coronation of the empress during his lifetime—a ceremony which was not usual in Russia—to be an indication of his intention that she should succeed to the throne upon his death.

Very soon after this, having exposed himself when in a feeble state of health, by standing in the water a long time and over-exerting himself in saving the lives of some sailors

and soldiers, who were near being wrecked in a storm upon the gulf of Finland, he was attacked by a painful disorder, to which he had been subject during the latter years of his life, and expired, with calmness and resignation, on the 28th of January, 1725. His sufferings during his last illness had been so intense, that he was unable to make any intelligible disposition as to the succession; and strange to say, the possessor of this mighty empire, of which the only fundamental law was the expressed will of the sovereign, died intestate. It is in the highest degree probable, that he had intended to appoint his wife as his successor; at any rate, assisted by the promptness of Menzikoff and her own resolution, Catharine ascended the throne without opposition.

The disorder which thus cut off the Czar in the fifty-fourth year of his age, was an acute inflammation of the intestines and bladder; but, as a matter of course, his death was attributed to poison. We do not observe that the Marquis de Custine has revived this story, which is matter of surprise to us, particularly as we believe that his friend, the Comte de Ségur, has adopted it in his history. The temptation to damage the character of the empress, and to represent her to posterity as an adulteress and a poisoner, was too strong to be resisted by the contemporary chroniclers. Lamberti gives us a detailed account of an intrigue of Catharine with one of her chamberlains, a melodramatic discovery made by Peter in an arbor, and a consequent determination upon his part to shut her up for life in a convent. She escaped her fate, according to the same faithful historian, in a singular manner. Peter, it appears, kept a memorandum-book, and was in the habit of making daily minutes of every thing he proposed to do; while one of Catharine's pages was in the habit of secretly bringing his Majesty's tablets from his dressing-room for the daily inspection of the empress. The intended imprisonment of Catharine, jotted down among other memoranda, was thus revealed to her; whereupon she

incontinently poisoned him. This story has been sufficiently disproved. It is hardly worth disproving; for it is not probable that a man who had suddenly made this discovery of the guilt of the woman who had just been crowned as empress, and whom he had now determined to imprison for life instead of designating her as his successor, would require to make any memorandum of the matter. And yet, we are expected to believe, than an entry was found upon Peter's tablets almost literally to this effect;—"*Mem.* To repudiate my wife, shave her head, and lock her up in a convent;"—as if otherwise the matter would have slipped his memory. How is it possible that our friend De Custine has allowed this story to escape him?

In the vast square of the Admiralty at St. Petersburgh stands the celebrated colossal statue of Peter the Great. Around him are palaces, academies, arsenals, gorgeous temples with their light and starry cupolas floating up like painted balloons, and tall spires sheathed in gold, and flashing like pillars of fire. This place, which is large enough for half the Russian army to encamp in, is bounded upon one side by the Admiralty building, the Winter Palace, and the Hermitage, the *façades* of the three extending more than a mile; in front of the Winter Palace rises the red, polished granite column of Alexander, the largest monolith in the world; from the side opposite the palace radiate three great streets, lined with stately and imposing buildings, thronged with population, and intersected by canals, which are all bridged with iron; across the square, on the side opposite the statue, stands the Isaac's Church, built of marble, bronze, granite, and gold, and standing upon a subterranean forest, more than a million large trees having been driven into the earth to form its foundation. The emperor faces the Neva, which pours its limpid waters through quays of solid granite, which for twenty-five miles line its length and that of its

branches; and beyond the river rise in full view the Bourse, the Academy of Arts and Sciences, and other imposing public edifices.

This equestrian statue has been much admired; we think justly so. The action of the horse is uncommonly spirited and striking, and the position of the emperor dignified and natural. He waves his hand, as if, like a Scythian wizard as he was, he had just caused this mighty, swarming city, with all its palaces and temples, to rise like a vapor from the frozen morasses of the Neva with one stroke of his wand. In winter, by moonlight, when the whole scene is lighted by the still, cold radiance of a polar midnight, we defy any one to pause and gaze upon that statue without a vague sensation of awe. The Czar seems to be still presiding in sculptured silence over the colossal work of his hands; to be still protecting his capital from the inundations of the ocean, and his empire from the flood of barbarism, which he always feared would sweep over it upon his death.

"How shall we rank him upon glory's page?"

It is impossible not to admire his genius, his indomitable energy, his unconquerable will. He proposed to himself, while yet a youth, the mighty task of civilizing his country, and of converting a mongrel Asiatic empire into a powerful European state. It is difficult to place one's self in the right position to judge him correctly. We are very far from agreeing with the Marquis de Custine, that his mistake was in importing his civilization. Russia had waited in vain quite long enough for the spontaneous and indigenous germination of the arts and sciences. Besides, in these days, when steam is so rapidly approximating and assimilating the different parts of the earth to each other, when railroads are opened to the Red Sea, and steamers paddle by the Garden of Eden, it is difficult to say what nation will long retain a peculiar and appropriate civilization of its own. That the Czar opened

the door to Europe and the ocean, that he erected a granite portal, a triumphal arch, upon his western frontier, is to us his greatest merit. If Russia is to be civilized, it must be through the influence of the West; if Russia is to be free, the hymn of liberty will never be wafted to her ears from the silent deserts of Asia, or the sepulchral stillness of China. The emperor did right to descend from his Sclavonic throne, and to go abroad to light the torch of civilization in more favored lands.

But while we admire the concentration of purpose which sustained him throughout his labors, we cannot help deploring the great and fundamental mistake which made them all comparatively worthless. A despot by birth, education, and temperament, he had never the most glimmering notion of the existence of a people. In Russia, then and at this day, there is not even the fiction of a people. Peter had a correct idea of the proper sources of civilization; he knew where and how to collect the seeds; but he forgot that there was nobody to civilize. A people may be humanized, cultivated, brought to any degree of perfection in arts, and arms, and sciences; but he undertook to civilize a state in which there was but one man, and that man himself. The root must grow, before the branches and the foliage. Of this the autocrat had no idea. He had already annihilated the only class which was not composed of slaves. With one stroke of his sceptre he had demolished the feudal nobility, or what corresponded in a degree to the feudal nobility of Europe, and had made all social rank throughout his empire to depend upon service to himself. What was accomplished at a later day in Western Europe, in the midst of long convulsions and struggles, by the upheaving of the democracy, was effected by the autocrat at a blow. This was a fatal error. There were slaves enough before. It was unnecessary to degrade the nobles. But the more closely we analyze Peter's character, the more cogently we are compelled to conclude, that his

actuating motive was rather his own fame than the good of his country. A great peculiarity of his ambition was, that, though possessed of eminent military talents and highly successful in his campaigns, he seems to have cared but little for the *certaminis gaudia;* to have taken but small delight in battles and victories for themselves; to have cared little for conquest, beyond what he required for his settled purpose. Conquering, he never aspires to be a conqueror; victorious over the greatest general of the age, he is ready to sheathe his sword as soon as the object of the contest is attained. His ambition was to be a founder, and he never, in victory or defeat, was once turned aside from his purpose. He was determined to advance his empire to the ocean, to create a new capital, and to implant there and throughout his empire the elements of European civilization. If his ambition had flown a little higher, had he determined to regenerate his people, the real civilization of his empire would have followed sooner than it is now likely to do. Of this he probably never dreamed. He was a despot throughout. He might have found other matters in England worthy of his attention, other institutions as intimately connected with civilization as the English naval architecture; but he appears to have been completely indifferent to the great spectacle presented to an autocrat by a constitutional kingdom. "Are these all lawyers?" said he, one day, when visiting the courts at Westminster. "What can be the use of so many lawyers? I have but two in my empire, and I mean to hang one of them as soon as I get back." He certainly might as well have hung them both; a country without law has very little need of lawyers.

It was because his country was inhabited by slaves, and not by a people, that it was necessar[illegible] in every branch of his great undertaking, to go into such i[illegible]nitesimal details. Our admiration of the man's power is, t[illegible] sure, increased by a contemplation of the extraordinary [illegible]tility of his genius.

its wide grasp, and its minute perception; but we regret to see so much elephantine labor thrown away. As he felt himself to be the only man in the empire, so in his power of labor he rises to a demigod, a Hercules. He felt that he must do every thing himself, and he did every thing. He fills every military post, from drummer to general, from cabin-boy to admiral; with his own hand he builds ships of the line, and navigates them himself in storm and battle; he superintends every manufactory, every academy, every hospital, every prison; with his own hand he pulls teeth and draws up commercial treaties,—wins all his battles with his own sword, at the head of his army, and sings in the choir as chief bishop and head of his church,—models all his forts, sounds all his harbours, draws maps of his own dominions, all with his own hand,—regulates the treasury of his empire and the account-books of his shop-keepers, teaches his subjects how to behave themselves in assemblies, prescribes the length of their coat-skirts, and dictates their religious creed. If, instead of contenting himself with slaves who only aped civilization, he had striven to create a people, capable and worthy of culture, he might have spared himself all these minute details; he would have produced less striking, instantaneous effects, but his work would have been more durable, and his fame more elevated. His was one of the monarch minds, who coin their age, and stamp it with their image and superscription; but his glory would have been greater if he had thought less of himself, and more of the real interests of his country. If he had attempted to convert his subjects from cattle into men, he need not have been so eternally haunted by the phantom of returning barbarism, destroying after his death all the labor of his lifetime, and which he could exorcise only by shedding the blood of his son. Viewed from this position, his colossal grandeur dwindles. It seems to us that he might have been so much more, that his possible seem to dwarf his actual achieve-

ments. He might have been the creator and the lawgiver of a people. He was, after all, only a tyrant and a city-builder. Even now, his successors avert their eyes from the West. The city of his love is already in danger from more potent elements than water. New and dangerous ideas fly through that magnificent western gateway. When the portal is closed, the keys thrown into the Baltic, and the discarded Moscow again embraced, how much fruit will be left from the foreign seeds transplanted? When the Byzantine empire is restored, perhaps we shall see their ripened development; the Russians of the lower empire will be a match for the Greeks who preceded them.

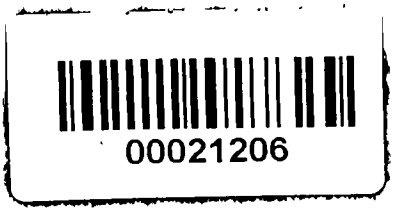
Still, we repeat, it is difficult to judge him justly. He seems to have felt a certain mission confided to him by a superior power. His object he accomplished without wavering, without precipitation, without delay. We look up to him as to a giant, as we see him striding over every adversary, over every obstacle in his path. He seems in advance of his country, of his age, of himself. In his exterior he is the great prince, conqueror, reformer; in his interior, the Muscovite, the barbarian. He was conscious of it himself. "I wish to reform my empire," he exclaimed, upon one occasion, "and I cannot reform myself." In early life, his pleasures were of the grossest character; he was a hard drinker, and was quarrelsome in his cups. He kicked and cuffed his ministers, on one occasion was near cutting the throat of Lefort in a paroxysm of drunken anger, and was habitually caning Prince Menzikoff. But, after all, he did reform himself, and, in the latter years of his life, his habits were abstemious and simple, and his days and nights were passed in labors for his country and his fame.

It is difficult to judge him justly. Perhaps it would have been impossible to have planted even the germs of civil or even social, liberty in such a wilderness as Russia was at his accession. It was something to lift the [illegible]

the waves of barbarism, where he found her "many fathoms deep." He accomplished a great deal. He made Russia a maritime country, gave her a navy and a commercial capital, and quadrupled her revenue; he destroyed the Strelitzes, he crushed the Patriarch, he abolished the monastic institutions of his empire. If he had done nothing else, he would, for these great achievements, deserve the eternal gratitude of his country.

END OF VOL. II.

Morton & Chapman, Printers, 2, Crane-court, Fleet-street.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